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I.

THE ARGUMENT FOR A FINITIST THEOLOGY.

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VI.

THEOLOGY AND THE "NEW INFINITE."

When Renouvier wrote his principal works he could say that the mathematicians were all agreed in rejecting the notion of an infinite number. As Arnal remarks,⁷⁰ "All the mathematicians who had weighed the terms of the alternative . . . were unanimous. All from Galileo to Cauchy had emphasized the impossibility of the infinite of quantity, the absurdity of the realized infinite. . . . Why should that which is impossible and absurd from the point of view of mathematics be maintained from the point of view of metaphysics?"

Since the middle of the last century, however, the mathematicians have been more favorably disposed towards the quantitative infinite, and the neo-criticists' appeal to the consensus of all mathematicians "from Galileo to Cauchy" is met by the counter-appeal to a rival consensus of philosophical

⁷⁰ *La Philosophie religieuse de Charles Renouvier*, p. 36.

mathematicians and mathematically-minded philosophers from Bolzano to Bertrand Russell. In the judgment of several contemporary thinkers one of the great achievements of the latter half of the nineteenth century was the discovery of a new definition of infinity, which, it is maintained, frees the conception from all the difficulties and puzzles found in it as formerly defined.

1. *The New Definition of Infinity.*—The "new" definition of infinity is an incident, perhaps the culminating incident, in the "generalization" of the concept of number.⁷¹ If we had only the *finite* whole numbers, 1, 2, 3, etc., while the fundamental operations of addition, multiplication, and involution would be in every case possible, the inverse operations would not be universally possible. For example, it would be impossible, if we had only such numbers, to subtract 3 from 2, to divide 2 by 3, or to find the square root of 3. In order that subtraction, division, and evolution may be universally possible, mathematicians have introduced the conception of *negative* numbers and *zero*, of *fractional* numbers, and of *irrational* and *imaginary* numbers. The definition of *infinite* or "*transfinite*" numbers should therefore be considered, not as an isolated incident, but as a part of this larger movement of mathematical thought.

One of the discoverers of transfinite number was Georg Cantor. His theory of number is found in two memoirs which appeared in the *Mathematische Annalen* for 1895 and 1897 under the title "*Beiträge zur Begründung der Transfiniten Mengenlehre.*" These memoirs have been translated into English by Philip E. Jourdain under the title of "*The Theory of Transfinite Numbers.*"⁷² Cantor here defines the "power" or "cardinal number" of an aggregate *M* as "the general concept which, by means of our active faculty of thought, arises from *M* when we make abstraction of the nature of its various elements *m* and of the order in which they are given." If we

⁷¹ Couturat, *De L'Infini Mathématique*, pp. 5-68, 281.

⁷² The Open Court Publishing Company, 1915.

do *not* make abstraction of the *order*, but only of the nature of the elements, the resulting concept is the *ordinal* number of the aggregate *M*. Two aggregates are *equivalent*, and therefore have the same cardinal number, "if it is possible to put them, by some law, in such a relation to one another that to every element of each one of them there corresponds one and only one element of the other."⁷³ Employing the notions of an *aggregate* and of *equivalence*, together with the notions of "bindings" and "coverings," Cantor then defines the concepts of "greater" and "less," and the operations of addition, multiplication, and involution.⁷⁴

This brings him to the discussion of the finite and transfinite numbers. "Aggregates with finite cardinal numbers," he says, "are called 'finite aggregates'; and all others we call 'transfinite aggregates,' and their cardinal numbers 'transfinite cardinal numbers.'"⁷⁵ The transfinite numbers are thus those that are *not finite*. We must therefore seek the distinguishing mark of the finite number. This is to be found in the following theorem: "If *M* is an aggregate such that it is of equal power with none of its parts, then the aggregate (*M*, *e*), which arises from *M* by the addition of a single new element *e*, has the same property of being of equal power with none of its parts." This theorem is used in establishing the fundamental properties of the "unlimited series of finite cardinal numbers,"⁷⁶ and becomes a virtual part of their definition. Finite aggregates, accordingly, are never equivalent to any of their parts, while transfinite aggregates may be. "The first example of a transfinite aggregate," continues Cantor, "is given by the totality of finite cardinal numbers; we call

⁷³ *The Theory of Transfinite Numbers*, p. 86.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-95. One aggregate is said to be greater than another (and therefore the cardinal number of the first greater than the cardinal number of the second) when (a) there is a part of the first which is equivalent to (i. e., can be put in one-to-one correspondence with) the second, but (b) no part of the second which is equivalent to the first (pp. 89 ff.).

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 97-103.

its cardinal number 'Aleph-zero.' The first transfinite cardinal number is, then, the cardinal number of the "totality" of finite cardinal numbers.⁷⁷

It should be noted that Cantor calmly assumes the logical tenability of this notion of the "totality" of an *unlimited* series, and as we shall presently see this is the crux of the whole matter. Just now, however, it is our purpose to understand the doctrine rather than to criticize it.

A further advance in the theory of number ought next to be noted. Cantor, as we have seen, defined "cardinal number" and "ordinal type" as "general concepts which arise by means of our mental activity." Frege, in his *Grundlagen der Arithmetik* of 1884, defined "the number of a class *u*" as "the class of all these classes which are equivalent to *u*." The same definition was discovered independently by Bertrand Russell. "The two chief reasons in favor of this definition," says Jourdain, "are that it avoids, by a construction of 'numbers' out of the fundamental entities of logic, the assumption that there are certain new and undefined entities called 'numbers'; and that it allows us to deduce at once that the class defined is not empty, so that the cardinal number *u* exists in the sense defined in logic; in fact, since *u* is equivalent to itself, the cardinal number of *u* has *u* at least as a member."⁷⁸ Cantor's definition of an infinite or transfinite number accordingly becomes "the class of all classes that are similar to parts of themselves."⁷⁹

The "New Infinite" was independently discovered by Richard Dedekind.⁸⁰ His definition runs as follows:⁸¹ "A system *S* is said to be *infinite* when it is similar to a proper part of itself; in the contrary case, *S* is said to be a *finite* system."

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 202 f.

⁷⁹ Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, pp. 262, 321.

⁸⁰ *Essays on the Theory of Numbers*, p. 41. This is a translation by W. W. Beman of Dedekind's papers on "*Stetigkeit und irrationale Zahlen*" and "*Was sind und was sollen die Zahlen.*"

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

The words "system," "similar," and "proper part" are employed in a technical sense, and require some explanation. A collection of objects is called a *system* (also by different writers an *aggregate*, *manifold*, or *set*) when it fulfils the following conditions:⁸²

(1) It includes all the objects to which a definite quality belongs.

(2) It includes no object which does *not* possess this quality.

(3) Each of the included objects is permanently the same, and distinct from all the others. These separate objects are called *elements*. In Dedekind's terminology, every system is a *part of itself*; while a system which contains some, but not all, of the elements of a given system is a *proper part* of the given system. The notion of *similarity* is identical with Cantor's "equivalence," and exactly the same meaning is conveyed by the phrase "one-to-one correspondence." Any two groups or series are said to stand to each other in the relation of one-to-one correspondence when for each element or term of the one there is one and only one element or term of the other, and *vice versa*. To borrow an illustration from Mr. Russell,⁸³ "The relation of father to son is called a one-many relation, because a man can have only one father but may have many sons; conversely, the relation of son to father is called a many-one relation. But the relation of husband to wife (in Christian countries) is called one-one, because a man cannot have more than one wife, or a woman more than one husband."

Dedekind's point is *not* that two systems which are assumed or already known to be infinite are similar or one-to-one correspondent, *even if* the one is only a part of the other. That such a similarity or equivalence is to be found between whole and part was, as we have seen, the very puzzle that had perplexed the older mathematicians. The achievement of Dedekind (if it is a genuine achievement) is rather the reversal of

⁸² Cf. *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1910, Article on *Number*.

⁸³ *Scientific Method in Philosophy*, p. 203.

the method of attack. The "similarity" of whole and part is no longer merely an observed fact, nor is it for him an *inference* from their infinity; but infinity is now *defined to be* such similarity. If a system or aggregate is similar to a proper part of itself, then it is infinite; and this is the *definition* of an infinite system.

2. *The New Infinite and Logical Finitism.*—It has been maintained by M. Couturat and others that Renouvier's critique of infinite number, and therefore his whole system of philosophy so far as it is based upon this critique, is founded upon an erroneous definition of the mathematical infinite.⁸⁴ It accordingly becomes a matter of some importance to inquire into the merits of this "new" and, as is maintained, more correct definition. Our examination will lead us to the conclusion that the "new" infinite is only the old infinite in a rather easily penetrable disguise; that the definition of Dedekind and Cantor is the logical equivalent of the definition suggested by etymology; that, therefore, if the reasoning of the neo-criticists is sound as long as we use the *old* definition, their arguments lose none of their cogency when we substitute the definition formulated by the new school of mathematicians.

If we had no other preceptor than etymology, we should at once conclude that the infinite is that which is limitless or incapable of completion. The definition of infinity adopted by Kant in his account of the "First Conflict of the Transcendental Ideas" appears to be no more than an elaboration of this notion of *Unendlichkeit*. "The infinity of a series," he says, "consists in this, that it can never be completed by means of a successive synthesis." Or again, "The true transcendental concept of infinity is, that the successive synthesis of units in measuring a quantity can never be completed."⁸⁵ For Kant, then, the infinite is simply and literally the *endless*.

Another definition which is of considerable historical im-

⁸⁴ *De L'Infini Mathématique*, pp. 444 ff.

⁸⁵ *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*, A, 426 and 432. (Mueller's translation, pp. 344, 348.)

portance is that of Bolzano. Professor Keyser paraphrases it as follows:⁸⁶ "Suppose given a class *C* of elements. Out of these suppose a series is formed by taking for first term one of the elements, for second term two of them, and so on. Any term so obtained is itself a class of elements, and is *defined* as finite. Now either the process in question will exhaust *C* or it will not. If it will, *C* is itself demonstrably finite; if it will not, *C* is *defined* to be infinite." Bolzano is recognized as the initiator of the movement which led to the formulation of the much-heralded "New Infinite"; and Keyser tells us in the article from which the above excerpt has been taken that Bolzano's definition, although perhaps not so convenient in the actual practice of the mathematician, is in principle exactly equivalent to that of Dedekind. However this may be, it is clear that Bolzano's definition is exactly equivalent to that of Kant. The difference between the two is formal only. Kant employs the method of addition; Bolzano that of subtraction. The former is thinking of the completion of a somewhat that exists only as a scheme or plan; the latter is thinking of the depletion of an already existing class of elements. Yet the fundamental thought is the same in both: that which is infinite is *endless*; and because it is endless, it is impossible either to construct anything so great as to equal it, or to take away from it anything so great as to exhaust it.

Let us now examine the "new" definition of infinity as it has been formulated by Dedekind. "A system *S* is said to be *infinite* when it is similar to a proper part of itself." As a first step in my argument that this infinite is only the old infinite in a new suit of clothes, I shall show that *whenever a series is found which is "similar to," that is to say, in one-to-one correspondence with, a proper part of itself, the series in question may be shown to be in several other kinds of correspondence with the same part*; in fact, any sort of correspondence that one pleases to look for may be discovered; and, furthermore, *any scheme or plan of correspondence may be*

⁸⁶ *Journal of Philosophy, etc.*, I, 33.

shown to be just as rigidly determined by law as any other— and specifically, as the scheme of one-to-one correspondence, which the partizans of the “New Infinite” have too hastily assumed to be *the* relation in which the two series eternally stand.

Consider as a typical case the series of even numbers, which, by definition, is a proper part of the series of whole numbers, and yet is required to stand in one-to-one correspondence with that series, by the law that each of its terms is a number *twice* the corresponding term of the series of whole numbers. This series illustrates the “similarity” of a system to a proper part of itself; and, therefore, by Dedekind’s definition, is infinite. But we find that any other correspondence than the one-to-one may be seen, if we wish to see it. This may be exhibited thus:

I.	(W)	1,	2,	3,	4,	5,	6,	...
	(P)	2,	4,	6,	8,	10,	12,	...
II.	(W)	1,	2,	3,	4,	5,	...	
	(P)	2,	4,	6,	8,	10,	12,	14, 16, 18, 20, ...
III.	(W)	1,	2,	3,	4,	5,	6,	7, 8, ...
	(P)	2,	4,	6,	8,	...		
IV.	(W)	1,	2,	3,	4,	5,	6,	7, 8, ...
	(P)	2,	4,	6,	8,	10,	12,	14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24. ...

Case I is the case which has been supposed to be *the* situation. In the other three cases we have respectively a one-to-two, a two-to-one, and a two-to-three correspondence. Now these other sorts of correspondence are determined by clear and definite rules, of exactly the same kind as, although a little more complicated than, the rule which determines the one-to-one correspondence. In Case II, let the rule be, that the second of the *two* terms paired with any *one* term of the whole series shall be *four* times that term; in Case III the second of the *two* terms of (W) is the same number as the *one* term of (P) with which the two terms of (W) are bound up; in IV every *two* terms of (W) are bound up with *three* of (P), and

the rule determining the correspondence is, that the last term of any given group of (P) shall be *three* times the last term of the corresponding group of (W). Now it is necessary to insist that the (P) of I, of II, of III, and of IV is exactly the *same* series. The "proper part," 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, ..., is the "proper part" that is considered in each case. It has been shown, then, that the whole series stands to this proper part in these *various* relations of correspondence in *exactly the same sense* in which it stands to it in the relation of *one-to-one* correspondence.

The proof that this is true of *any* proper part of the series of whole numbers that one may choose to consider, as for example, the series of multiples by 3, 4, etc., or of squares, cubes, etc., of the terms of the natural series of numbers, must be left to the ingenuity and patience of the reader.⁸⁷ He will find that the correspondence of a whole and a proper part of itself, which has been taken as the essential notion in the "new" definition of infinity, turns out, when more closely scrutinized, to be a nose of wax; it can be bent in any direction that one pleases.

How then shall we interpret Dedekind's definition, in the light of our examination of these examples of the relation of one-to-one correspondence of whole and part? "A system S is *infinite* if it is similar to a proper part of itself." Does this mean (1) That the whole and the proper part in question are in one-to-one correspondence, *and in no other*, or (2) that the whole is in one-to-one correspondence with a proper part of itself, but is *also* related to the *same* part in accordance with *other* schemes of correspondence?

If the former interpretation is correct, then, so far as I am aware, no genuine example of an infinite system has ever been

⁸⁷ In the typewritten copy of this dissertation, which may be found in the library of the Johns Hopkins University, I have considered these and other series in considerable detail, and have suggested formulae for several types of proper parts, by the use of which an " m -to- n correspondence" (m and n being any whole numbers) may be determined between the series of whole numbers and any given proper part.

adduced. At any rate, no example of an infinite system is revealed by an examination of the mutual relations of the various series of cardinal numbers. If this is the meaning of the definition, the class of all classes each of which is "similar" to a proper part of itself is a *class without any members*; for we have found that in every case where a one-to-one correspondence is discoverable, correspondences of other sorts are also discoverable.

On the other hand, if the latter is understood to be the meaning of the definition, if the whole and its proper part are in a relation of one-to-one correspondence, and *also* in relations of one-to-two correspondence, two-to-three correspondence, etc., then the definition is not *new*, but is logically identical with or at all events necessarily implies the old definition of the infinite as the *endless*; for any endless series is *inexhaustible*, and, between two inexhaustible collections, it is always possible to exhibit a one-to-one correspondence, or any sort of correspondence that one chooses to look for, inasmuch as, however far the pairing of terms or the correlation of groups may be carried, there can never be any dearth of partners or of groups of terms in either collection.

We should expect, then, that the logical absurdity found by Renouvier in the conception of a "realized infinite" would not be removed by so simple an expedient as the re-phrasing of the definition of infinity. The creators of the "New Infinite" have indeed "taken the bull by the horns,"⁸⁸ and have sought to escape the self-contradiction lurking in the notion of infinity by making this very self-contradiction the heart and center of their definition. But this does not remove the contradiction. Although it has been sugar-coated, it is still there; and it is an obvious, though not infrequently neglected, logical requirement that, to quote the words of Poincaré, "in defining an object we affirm that the definition does not imply a contradiction."⁸⁹

⁸⁸ James, *Problems of Philosophy*, p. 176.

⁸⁹ *Science et Méthode*, p. 162.

Now when Dedekind speaks of the endless series of cardinal numbers as a *system*, he tacitly imports the notion of finitude into his definition of infinity. For we naturally think of a system as a whole, a somewhat that is completely given. The self-contradiction appears even more clearly when we consider the phraseology of Cantor. His "infinite aggregate" is conceived as a "totality." Thus his first example of an infinite or transfinite aggregate is the "totality of finite cardinal numbers."⁹⁰ But as he himself speaks of "the unlimited series of cardinal numbers,"⁹¹ it is clear that he has fallen into a self-contradiction, or else that in his usage the term "totality" is not to be understood in the same sense as in the arguments of the neo-criticist school. For, if the series of numbers is *unlimited*, what right have we to speak of it as a *whole* or a *totality*? If the word "totality" is understood in the sense in which it is employed by Renouvier and Pillon, its use in a definition of the number "Aleph-zero" would constitute a begging of the whole question which is at issue between the finitists and the infinitists. If, however, when Cantor speaks of a "totality," he means no more than that the collection or series which he denotes by the term is *determinate* (that is, is so defined that it is in principle possible to distinguish it from every other collection or series and always possible to tell whether or not it includes any given term or collection of terms), then such a "totality" may be infinite in the *old* sense, that is to say, it may be *endless*. For example, we can always tell whether or not a given number belongs to the series of even numbers or to the series of odd numbers; and, inasmuch as these series are thus logically distinguishable, there is a sense in which they are definite and thinkable unities; yet each of these series is endless, because, by the very law of its formation, however far it is continued, we must needs look for more and still more terms. Such determinate but endless series are, indeed, examples of Renouvier's "indefinite." But

⁹⁰ *The Theory of Transfinite Numbers*, p. 103.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

in Renouvier's terminology an "endless totality" would be a contradiction in terms. That is why a "realized infinite" is logically impossible. An infinite that was *realized*, a somewhat actually existing and not merely a scheme or plan in process of realization, would be a *totality* in the sense that no part of it would be wanting; and yet as *infinite* it would be endless or *unfinished*.

There may be, and no doubt are, many logically distinguishable types of endless series; and accordingly it is perfectly legitimate for the mathematician to study these various types, and even to call them transfinite *numbers* if he wishes to employ that terminology, and is not himself led astray by it. But unless we forget this ambiguity in the meaning of the term "totality," it is impossible to suppose that the definition of "transfinite number" has made any contribution whatever toward the solution of the logical difficulty found by the school of Renouvier in the conception of a "realized infinite."

3. *The New Infinite and Monistic Idealism.*—We must next inquire what bearing, if any, these recent discussions of the definition of infinity have upon the doctrine of the monistic Absolute. Monistic idealism, I have said, implies the conception of infinity in both senses. In our second chapter we saw that God cannot be conceived without contradiction to be infinite in the first sense—he cannot be regarded as including all reality; and now it is in order to consider the dependence of monistic idealism upon the notion of infinity in the second sense—upon the mathematical or numerical infinite. There are two ways in which monistic idealism implies the notion of a realized infinite:

(a) The Absolute is said to be in possession of all time in an *Eternal Now*. "The real world of our Idealism has to be viewed by us men as a temporal order. For it is a world where purposes are fulfilled. . . ." But "this same temporal order is, when regarded in its wholeness, an Eternal Order. . . . The whole real content of this temporal order . . . is *at once*

known, i. e., is consciously experienced as a whole, by the Absolute."⁹²

This may perhaps mean that the temporal order is an "illusion of the partial view," that it belongs to the realm of mere appearance and not to that of genuine reality. We have already pointed out the difficulty of attaching any meaning to the proposition that time is illusory,⁹³ and need not repeat what has already been said. The sentences just quoted from Professor Royce are capable of another interpretation. When he says that the whole content of the temporal order is known *at once*, he himself explains the phrase *at once* as equivalent to *in the same present*. Now the present, he tells us, is sometimes understood to be the mathematical line which separates the future and the past, and as a mere boundary to be without extent. Again the *present* "is any one temporal event, in so far as it is contrasted with antecedent and subsequent events, and in so far as it excludes them from coexistence with itself in the same portion of any succession." In the third place, the *present* "is any portion of real time with all its included events, in so far as there is any reason to view it as a whole, and as known in this wholeness by a single experience."⁹⁴ When Royce says, then, that the whole temporal order is known *at once*, his meaning *may be* no more than that the whole temporal order is a whole. All time is present to the Absolute as a *totum simul*.⁹⁵

Here, however, we meet the difficulty of the realized infinite, of the *totality of the unlimited*. Royce seeks to justify the conception of the *totum simul* by regarding it as analogous to the "specious present" of the individual mind. We perceive the words of a phrase or a brief clause like "The curfew tolls the knell of parting day," not merely as successive, but also all at once, as a whole. In the same way the Absolute,

⁹² Royce, *The World and the Individual*, II, 134 and 138.

⁹³ Chapter II, Section 2 (b).

⁹⁴ *The World and the Individual*, II, 140.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

thinks Royce, knows all the events of all time at once or as a whole. Many questions might be asked about the analogy of the "specious present" and the "totum simul." But we can not ask them here. I merely wish to stress the point that the idealistic doctrine of an Eternal Now must stand or fall with the logical possibility or impossibility of the realized infinite. For *all time* includes the unlimited past and the unlimited future; and how can that which is unlimited be a whole?⁹⁶

(b) The argument for monistic idealism depends upon the assumption that a thing exists "just in so far as there is experience of its existence."⁹⁷ This principle is a special application of the more general principle of the "internality of relations." If a "thing" is constituted by the relations in which it stands, then the attempt to define anything must inevitably lead to an infinite regress; and the infinite regress is logically intolerable. This is the burden of Mr. F. H. Bradley's *Appearance and Reality*. The attempt to define any of the ordinary categories of thought, as *substance*, *quality*, *relation*, *the self*, etc., brings us to no final or satisfactory conclusion, but merely produces an endless series.

Critics of a realistic temper may cut the knot by denying the principle of the internality of relations. Royce, however, is committed to this principle, and therefore seeks to avoid the difficulty by maintaining that the "infinite regress" is not a fatal defect. It is fatal, he holds, only when you take it term by term, *i. e.*, successively; if you assume the infinite multitude or series of terms to be given *all at once* in one single purpose or plan, the infinity becomes harmless.

How then is it possible to take the "infinite regress" all at once? The problem, thinks Royce, is solved for us in Dedekind's definition of infinity. Thus the New Infinite becomes a main support of monistic philosophy. Idealism implies an infinite system, and the discovery of Dedekind permits us to think of the infinite not merely as endless but as an instance

⁹⁶ Compare Chapter V, Section 2.

⁹⁷ *The Conception of God*, p. 43.

of self-representation. "Whatever considerations make for an idealistic interpretation of reality, become considerations which also tend to prove that the universe is an infinitely complex reality, or that a certain infinite system of facts is real. For idealism, in defining the Being of things as necessarily involving their existence for some form of knowledge, is committed to the thesis that whatever is, is *ipso facto* known (e. g., to the Absolute). . . . Since, however, the fact world even for idealism contains many aspects (such as the aspects called feeling, will, worth, and the like) which are not identical with knowledge, although for an idealist they all exist as known aspects of the world, it follows that for an idealist the facts which constitute the existence of knowledge are themselves but a part and not the whole of the world of facts; yet, by hypothesis, this part, since it contains acts of knowledge corresponding to every real fact, is adequate to the whole, or in Dedekind's sense is equal to the whole. Hence the idealist's system of facts must, by Dedekind's definition, be infinite; or for the idealist the real world is a self-representative system, and is therefore infinite."⁹⁸

Moreover, if we try "to conceive . . . the universe in realistic terms as a realm whose existence is supposed to be independent of the mere accident that anyone does or does not know or conceive it, . . . it is possible to show that this supposed universe has the character of a self-representative system," that is to say, is infinite. For, "if the supposition is itself a fact, then, at that instant, when the supposition is made, the world of Being contains at least two facts, namely, F and your supposition about F ." Call the supposition f . Then your universe is at least $F + f$. But, "this universe as thus symbolized, has not merely a twofold, but a threefold constitution. It consists of F and of f , and of their $+$, i. e., of the relation as real as both of them, which we try to regard as non-essential to the being of either of them, but which for that

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 40.

very reason, has to be supposed wholly other than themselves, just as they are supposed to be different from each other."⁹⁹

"Hereupon, of course, Mr. Bradley's now familiar form of argument enters with its full rights . . . the + is linked to *f* and to *F* and the 'endless fission' unquestionably 'breaks out.' The relation itself is seen entering into what seem new relations."¹⁰⁰

Thus Royce agrees with Bradley that every form of realistic being "involves such endless or self-representative constitution";¹⁰¹ that, in particular, realistic being breaks down upon the contradictions resulting from this constitution. Royce, however, does not accept the view "that to be self-representative is as such to be self-contradictory." This conclusion, he thinks, is obviated by the help of the definition of infinity as a self-representative system. The notion of "self-representation" permits us to take an infinite multiplicity all at once.

Royce illustrates his meaning in various ways. Some manufacturers have ingeniously used a picture of the package in which their product is contained as a trade-mark, and have then placed this trade-mark as a label upon the package. But the package thus labeled with its own picture, inevitably requires the picture to contain for accuracy's sake . . . a picture of itself."¹⁰² Or suppose that somewhere upon the soil of England there is a map of England. Suppose, further, that this map is a perfect representation, indicating every detail of the surface of England. It is clear that this map must contain a map of itself.

The attempt actually to construct an accurate picture or a perfect map of the sort just described would indeed require an endless process and therefore be impossible of fulfilment; but, says Royce, the plan itself is given all at once. "Mathematically regarded the endless series of maps within maps, if made according to such a projection as we have indicated,

⁹⁹ *The World and the Individual*, p. 538 f.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 540.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 542.

¹⁰² *The World and the Individual*, pp. 506 f.

would cluster about a limiting point, whose position would be exactly determined. Logically speaking their variety would be a mere expression of the single plan, 'Let us make within England and upon the surface thereof, a precise map, with all the details of the contour of its surface.' . . . The *one* plan of mapping in question necessarily implies just this infinite variety of internal constitution. . . . We are not obliged to deal solely with processes of construction as successive in order to define endless series."¹⁰² "To conceive the true nature of the infinite, we have not to think of its vastness, or even negatively of its endlessness; we have merely to think of its self-representative character."¹⁰³

Does this idea of "self-representation" escape the difficulty of the "endless regress"? The issue thus raised is in principle the same as that involved in the conception of the "totality" of an unlimited series; yet inasmuch as we have taken Professor Royce as the typical exponent of monistic idealism it seems proper to devote a few paragraphs to a discussion of the illustration which he himself employs. "A map of England, contained within England, is to represent down to the smallest detail every contour and marking, natural or artificial, that occurs upon the surface of England."¹⁰⁴ The perfection of the map requires that there be a "one-to-one correspondence, *point for point*, of the surface mapped and the representation." In other words, if *A* is the surface mapped and *A'* the representation, "for every elementary detail of *A*, namely, *a, b, c, d* (be these details conceived as points or merely as physically smallest parts; as relations amongst the parts of a *continuum*, or as relations amongst the units of a mere aggregate of particles), some corresponding detail, *a', b', c', d'*, could be identified in *A'*, in accordance with the system of projection used."

Let us consider first the notion of *perfect* representation where the copy is assumed to be *smaller* than the original, and then that of perfect *self*-representation.

¹⁰² *Hibbert Journal*, I, 35.

¹⁰⁴ *World and Individual*, I, 503 ff.

In the opinion of Royce, "that a smaller picture should be a perfect representation of a larger object is a perfectly definable ideal."¹⁰⁵ But that, even as an ideal, it is not a self-contradictory conception is by no means clear. If only details that are visible to the naked eye are pictured, there is no difficulty; for a microscope may be used to read the map. But if the object to be pictured is itself viewed under the microscope, and all the details *thus* visible are to be represented, it is clear that if the map or picture were much smaller than the original, exact *legible* representation would be impossible. If now it be replied, as Royce would perhaps reply, that the quality of being *legible* is irrelevant to the notion of perfect mapping, that all that is meant by it is, that for every detail of the original there shall be a corresponding detail in the copy, then it is clear that, if both original and copy are assumed to be made up of a *finite* number of indivisible units, such perfect mapping is impossible, unless the copy be assumed to possess a *finer texture* than the original (*i. e.*, to contain a greater number of indivisible units to the square inch). If, however, there is assumed to be no difference in texture, the points or ultimate units of which the material of the map or picture is composed must be *infinitely* numerous.

In other words, the perfect representation of any object on a smaller scale implies, either that the copy, although smaller, contains exactly as many ultimate units as the original, or else that the copy is a *continuum*, or at least a *compact* collection of points. If we assume the notion of the continuum, there is, then, no difficulty in the idea of a perfect representation of a larger by a smaller surface. Indeed, if we assume that space is *continuous* or *compact*, such representation is an everywhere-present fact; because, for every point in a solid or a surface, there must then be assumed to be a point in any other solid or surface, however small the latter may be.

It is clear, then, that the idea of an absolutely *perfect* representation, even without the added notion of *self-representation*, requires the conception of an infinite multiplicity of ele-

¹⁰⁵ *Hibbert Journal*, I, 27.

ments, unless we make the above-mentioned assumption concerning the finer texture of the material of the copy. It is indeed essential to Royce's argument that the map be drawn upon the soil of England, and therefore be an example of *self-representation*; but this is not essential to the idea of the map as an illustration of *infinity*. All that is required is the assumption that for every point in the surface of England there shall be a point on the map, *however small the map is drawn*. But as I have already remarked, this follows from the notion of the continuum. If two surfaces are both assumed to be continuous, then, however large the one may be and however small the other, for every point in the one there is a point (or, for that matter, and this destroys the notion of a *definite* representation, there are two, three, or as many as you please) in the other. Instead, then, of supposing a map within a map, and so on forever, we can just as well suppose the original map without the loss of any detail to become smaller and smaller without limit. On either assumption the perfect mapping, even of only the *visible* markings of England's surface, would imply the notion of an infinite multitude of points in any designated portion of the surface upon which the map is drawn.

In the case of *self-representation*, or rather of representation by a *part* of that which is represented, it is obvious that the notion of infinite multitude must be assumed; for here we have representation on a smaller scale, and there is no difference in the texture of the original and the copy, or at least of part of the original and the copy. We find then that we have been traveling in a circle. In an effort to avoid the endless regress we have defined a conception of self-representation, only to find, when we examine our conception a little more closely, that it contains the very notion which it was designed to escape. If, then, the notion of an endless regress is self-contradictory, that of self-representation, or of a purpose that is infinitely rich in implications, is likewise self-contradictory.

We conclude, therefore, that the "discovery" of the so-called New Infinite leaves the problems of theology exactly as

it found them; and that the apparent bearing of the new conception of infinity upon these problems is the result of a double use of such terms as "totality" and "equality."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ The reader may be interested in Royce's use of the New Infinite to explain the relation of the Absolute to the Particular Self (*Hibbert Journal*, I, 44) and in Keyser's attempt by its aid to defend the doctrine of the Trinity and that of the divine omniscience (*The New Infinite and the Old Theology*, pp. 85 ff.). It seems clear that both writers are merely playing on the word *equality*.

Professor Royce suggests that "a wholly new light" is thrown "upon the possible relations of equality which, in a perfected state, might exist between what we now call an Individual or a Created Self and God as the Absolute Self. Perhaps a being, who, in one sense, appeared infinitely less than God, or who at all events was but one of an infinite number of parts within the divine whole, might, nevertheless, justly count it not robbery to be equal to God, if only this partial being by virtue of an immortal life or of a perfected process of self-attainment, received in the universe somewhere an infinite expression." When we recall, however, that to be 'equal' here means no more than to be of the same "*Mächtigkeit*," i. e., to be in the relation of one-to-one correspondence, it is far from clear that the "infinite expression" of the partial being is of any spiritual or ethical significance.

Professor Keyser, who is by profession a mathematician, tells us that it is a great error to suppose that the whole-part axiom is universally valid. It ought rather to be considered as a "logical blade" which divides the finite from the infinite. Some of the difficulties of theology, Professor Keyser assures us, have been caused by assuming that this axiom applies to infinities.

Thus the doctrine of the Trinity has been pronounced absurd, because it implies that one infinite is composed of three infinities, and that each of the three is equal not only to each of the others but to the whole which they jointly constitute. But this objection, says Keyser, erroneously assumes that the whole-part axiom holds for infinities. He illustrates the logical possibility of the conception of a One which is also Three by means of the relation of the number-system to certain of its parts. Let M be the manifold of all rational numbers, E of the even numbers, O of the odd numbers, and F of the rational fractions; then it is evident that E , O , and F are proper parts of M ; and also that a one-to-one correspondence is discoverable between M and each of these parts taken separately. Therefore by Dedekind's definition, M , E , O , and F are all infinite manifolds. "What is important is now obvious," says Keyser. "It is that we have here three infinite manifolds, E , O , F , no two of which have so much as a single element in common, and yet the three together constitute one manifold M exactly equal in wealth of elements to each of its infinite components." The application to the theological Trinity is of course evident.

An obvious objection here presents itself. One might naturally inquire why there are just *three* rather than *two* or *four* persons. Indeed the mathematical analogy suggests an infinity, or at least a very large number, of constituent persons; and, as we have seen, Royce holds that the Absolute may be conceived without contradiction to include a multitude, and, in fact, an infinite multitude, of selves. This objection, however, misses Keyser's point, which is, not that the doctrine of the Trinity can be mathematically demonstrated, but merely that, if on some other ground we believe that the One is Three and the Three are One, the conception is not logically absurd.

It may be questioned, however, whether the aid thus so kindly proffered by *Mathesis* to Theology will be very enthusiastically received. On the one hand, Trinitarians like Cardinal Newman, who seems to have liked the doctrine all the more on account of its incomprehensibility (see Newman, *The Grammar of Assent*, pp. 124 ff.), may even be disposed to resent this attempt to make their cherished formula as plain and clear as the multiplication table or the rule of three; for, if the Trinity is not incomprehensible, half the merit of assenting to the ancient creeds will be lost. On the other hand, adherents of the "new theology" who still consider themselves Trinitarians have learned to interpret the ancient formulæ in such a way as to remove the contradiction; and therefore do not recognize the need of a demonstration of the conceivability of a numerical Trinity in Unity.

The "new" conception of infinity is also employed by Professor Keyser in defense of the doctrine of the divine omniscience. Objection has frequently been made to this doctrine on the ground that it seems to abolish human freedom and to make God responsible for human sin. Keyser suggests that we may preserve the *dignity* of omniscience while giving up omniscience in the strict sense of the term. Suppose the knowledge of all events to include an infinite number of knowledge-elements. Now suppose this infinite manifold to be divided by a plane which in our imaginative construction represents the present instant. Then it is evident that there is a one-to-one correspondence between the manifold of elements either before or behind this boundary and the undivided manifold. In other words, the knowledge of the past alone is just as infinite as the knowledge of the events of all time. Accordingly, even if God is assumed to have no knowledge of undetermined future events, His knowledge is nevertheless infinite; and, in the phraseology of the partizans of the New Infinite, God may still be said to possess the *dignity* or *Mächtigkeit* of omniscience. The same argument is easily made to fit the case of omnipotence or of omnipresence. In an infinite world the Deity might then be infinite in knowledge, power, etc., without being omniscient, omnipotent, or omnipresent. One may, however, be sufficiently "tough-minded" to inquire just what is the value of the word "infinite" and the phrases "dignity of omniscience," etc.? Certainly no one would hold that merely to be infinitely rich in numerical elements is a quality which is of any *ethical* value; for, if it were, then *any* portion of a continuum would possess this transcendent dignity.

VII.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS ON FINITIST THEOLOGY.

1. *A Recapitulation of the Argument for the Divine Finitude.*—We have been led to conclude that God is finite in both senses of the word—that he is not infinite either in the sense of including or possessing an infinite number of elements, or in the sense of including or controlling the whole of reality. Our position is therefore completely opposed to that of monistic idealism, according to which God or the Absolute is infinite in both these senses. It may be well to give a summary restatement of the reasonings which have led us to this conclusion.

(a) As Royce himself has shown, his conception of the Absolute presupposes the notion of the realized infinite. But the conception of a *realized* infinite is a contradiction in terms; for that which is infinite or endless is not realized or complete. And the “new” conception of infinity does not escape the logical defect of the “old”; for, as we have seen, the attempt to get rid of the self-contradiction by including it in the definition is not satisfactory: the contradiction, though concealed from view, still remains.¹⁰⁷

(b) The Absolute is said to experience all in an “Eternal Now”; but the notion of an experience which is itself “timeless” while yet including experiences of temporal relation is self-contradictory.¹⁰⁸ Moreover the “Eternal Now” would be a realized infinite, and on that account, too, logically impossible.¹⁰⁹

(c) The Absolute is an all-containing mind and possesses an all-inclusive experience. Now there can be no all-inclusive experience; for it is psychologically impossible for certain of

¹⁰⁷ Chapter VI.

¹⁰⁸ Chapter II, Section 2 (b).

¹⁰⁹ Chapter VI, Section 2.

the experiences of the individual mind, especially such as are conditioned by limitation and isolation, to be identical parts of an all-inclusive mind. For such a mind, by virtue of the fact that it is all-inclusive, is unable to have these experiences. And yet if it does not have them, it is not all-inclusive.¹¹⁰

(d) The identification of God with the Absolute is vetoed by the *ethical* difficulty which besets every doctrine of the divine omnipotence. God is good; and, in a world such as ours, no good being can be omnipotent. Not only does this objection hold against the conception of the Absolute, but against that of a Mind that possesses a *knowledge about* all things without including everything as an identical part of its own experience; for, if a Being were omniscient even in this restricted sense, such a Being would be, if not in Royce's phrase "world possessing," yet certainly world-controlling, that is to say, *omnipotent*.¹¹¹

(e) The theory of monistic idealism is unsatisfactory as a *practical* philosophy, inasmuch as it logically implies a life of acquiescence rather than of action.¹¹²

(f) Considered as the equivalent of or as a substitute for the traditional idea of God, the Absolute is *religiously* inadequate. It lacks *worth*, and does not satisfy man's craving for fellowship with a *Person*.¹¹³

On the other hand, the theory of a Supreme Being who is limited in knowledge and power is *logically* unobjectionable, is not inconsistent with the presence of evil in the world as it now is, implies the genuineness of human coöperation with God in the contest with evil, and offers man an Object worthy of his worship, a Person who desires his love.

3. *The Difficulties of Finitist Theology.*—Let us not, however, assume too hastily that finitist theology is completely

¹¹⁰ Chapter II, Section 2 (b).

¹¹¹ Chapters III and IV.

¹¹² Chapter II, Section 2 (c).

¹¹³ Chapter II, Section 2 (a).

satisfactory as a religious doctrine. Several questions present themselves:

(a) *Is Finitist Theology a Monotheism or a Polytheism?*—

If God is the whole of existence, or even if he is assumed to be distinct from, or only a part of, the universe but yet omnipotent, there can be no doubt that there is but *one* God; for there can not be more than one whole of existence or more than one omnipotent. If, however, we maintain that God is only a part of being, and that his power is so limited that some parts or aspects of being are not subject to his control, the proposition that there is but one God is far from self-evident.

For most of us, indeed, the issue of polytheism *versus* monotheism does not present a "live option." It does not appear to have been a live issue even for William James. Charles Renouvier, however, declines to decide one way or the other, and, indeed, is very favorably disposed toward polytheism. "The doctrine of unity," he says, "submits all the beings of the world to a royal authority which varies from the most absolute autocracy to a government tempered by a measure of liberty conceded to the subjects."¹¹⁴ On the other hand, the doctrine of a plurality of divine beings appears to Renouvier more accordant with republicanism. "Polytheism is the plurality of powers in the unity of direction." The same considerations which make for a belief in immortality lead Renouvier to look with favor upon the conception of a plurality of Gods. He thinks it improbable that all personal beings but one should be such as to be included in the class of men; and, like the ancients, supposes that men may be raised to the rank of Gods.¹¹⁵

One of his interpreters remarks that, though one may at first be surprised and possibly shocked by Renouvier's evident liking for polytheism, the saint-worship of the Roman Catholic Church would readily suggest such a doctrine. Furthermore, "the theology of the Councils of Nicæa, of Constanti-

¹¹⁴ Renouvier, *Psychologie rationelle*, Vol. III, p. 259.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 255 f.

nople, of Chalcedon, affirm, and modern theologians still accept, the multiplicity of divine persons. The Christian Trinity is not a doctrine of the divine unity."¹¹⁶

It is true that Renouvier suggests that "this polytheism is far from being irreconcilable with the unity of God; . . . for the one God would then be the first of the superhuman persons, *rex hominum et deorum*."¹¹⁷ It is, however, perfectly conceivable that there should be a number of superhuman persons all finite in power, and that none of them should be "king." Indeed, to anticipate the theoretical doubt which is discussed in the next section, if all the members of such a pantheon, whether it were monarchical or democratic in its organization, could be known to be *good*, it is not evident that the polytheistic conception would be religiously unsatisfying. However, as remarked above, the issue does not present a "live option," and it will be better to assume, in the further discussion, that there is but one God.

(b) *Is the Supreme Being Good?*—It is true that the logical motive for the doctrine that God is finite is the desire to save his goodness. Our argument has been, God is good; the world is, in part, evil; therefore God's power is limited. His finitude is thus an inference from his perfect goodness; but it is evident that the argument cannot be reversed. The perfect goodness cannot be inferred from the finitude of the Deity.

If we divest ourselves of our prejudices, and forget the affinity of the words *good* and *God*, it is possible to conceive the existence of a being who is immeasurably more powerful than all others, and yet is not good. Such a Supreme Being might be defined as Power plus Intelligence plus Conscious Purpose. But the purpose toward which the power is directed need not include any concern for the pains and pleasures or the ideal values of humankind. As a man intent upon the accomplishment of some end goes his way, and does not even notice the ant-hill which his hurrying foot has demolished, so

¹¹⁶ Arnal, *Philosophie Religieuse de Charles Renouvier*, pp. 148 f.

¹¹⁷ *Psychologie rationnelle*, III, 255.

the Supreme Purpose might seek its own fulfilment wholly regardless of the hopes and wishes of the denizens of our planet. A consciously purposive Power wholly uninterested in the affairs of men is, accordingly, a *logically* possible conception of God.

Even the addition to this conception of that notion of an interest in human doings and sufferings which, I have said, is not necessarily included in the universal purpose, does not bring us at once to the Christian thought of a Father-God. It may indeed fall far short of it. The interest of the Supreme Power in human affairs might be entirely non-moral. It might be an interest in mundane happenings as a spectacle. Such a God might take pleasure in the happiness of his creatures, and *also* in their pains and disappointments, in their sorrows as well as in their joys. In short God as thus defined might be a Supreme Setebos, like him of whom Caliban muses in Browning's verse:

Thinketh such shows nor right nor wrong in Him
Nor kind, nor cruel: He is strong and Lord.
'Am strong myself compared to yonder crabs
That march now from the mountain to the sea;
'Let twenty pass, and stone the twenty-first,
Loving not, hating not, just choosing so.

If, now, we add to our conception of a Supreme Being the notion of moral quality, there still remains a horrible and repulsive possibility; for moral quality may be bad as well as good. The Supreme Power might be malevolent.

A reversal of the traditional theodicy is not inconceivable. Indeed the very argument by which men have sought to prove that this is the best might be employed with a few alterations to prove that it is the worst possible world. The elements of goodness which mar the perfection of absolute evil might be said to be required to set off the evil by contrast; or the Supreme Fiend might be supposed to be limited in his management of the universe by a sort of "iron law of wages": a certain amount of pleasure might be necessary to insure the continuance of the pain-economy.

To be sure, no one takes such a possibility very seriously; yet, from the standpoint of mere logic and cold facts, it is not unthinkable. The goodness of God cannot be proved. It can only be believed; that is, assumed as a working principle of human life. And, unless this assumption is made, the doctrine of a finite God has no religious value.

(c) *Does the God of Finitist Theology Exist?*—In a discussion of the adequacy of the idea of God the existential question can not be wholly ignored. It is true that the value of the idea is not wholly dependent upon its objective reality;¹¹⁸ yet, if a man were convinced that the idea of God is *merely* an ideal, then for him its value would be seriously impaired. If the existence of God is to be proved, the demonstration will have to consist in an exhibition of the evidences of his presence in the world. But no one will maintain that the argument from design establishes more than the *probability* of God's existence. Moreover, if, without evidence of his presence, we could become convinced of his existence, mere existence would not be enough. An entity that *does* nothing (although the thought of such an entity might avail to relieve one's loneliness) would not be completely adequate. From this point of view the question of the existence of God merges in that of his power.

We have criticized monistic idealism on the ground that, by reason of its doctrine of the eternal perfection of the Whole, it tends to quietism, to the mood of the "moral holiday." But there is danger of reaching a similar position from the opposite direction. The finite God may be so limited in our thought of him as to make it doubtful whether he can in any significant sense be said to be *supreme*. Thus the same modification that makes the traditional doctrine of God theoretically tolerable threatens to destroy its practical value. For if men should be convinced that, while there is a God, his power and intelligence are not adequate to the task of world redemption, they would fall into despair; and nothing

¹¹⁸ Mill, *Autobiography*; Vaihinger, *Die Philosophie des Als Ob*.

so completely paralyzes action as despair. There is inspiration for strong natures in the thought of coöperation with a God who actually needs our help; but not all are strong, and even the strongest and most daring spirits have their hours of depression, when they need to feel that there is sufficient power on their side to assure the ultimate victory of the Right. From this point of view the question of God's existence is equivalent to a question about the salvability of the world. It may, accordingly, be rephrased thus: *Is there, in this world of ours, sufficient power and intelligence in the service of good will, to assure the realization and preservation of the values that we hold dear?*

4. *Finitist Theology and the Right to Believe.*—By William James finitist theology is combined with a doctrine of the "will to believe." The existence of God can not be proved by scientific methods of demonstration. Considered as a hypothesis it is, indeed, not inconsistent with the facts; but neither is the contrary hypothesis. Now, says James, this is a case where we ought to practise the will to believe. "Our passional nature not only lawfully may, but must, decide an option between propositions, whenever it is a genuine option that cannot by its nature be decided on intellectual grounds."¹¹⁹ In other words, though James nowhere puts it in just this way, we are at liberty to act *as if* we were certain of God's existence, even if we have no intellectual grounds, or have only insufficient grounds, for certainty.

There are, however, obvious objections to this procedure. It seems to encourage the all too common tendency to superficial thinking, where one's own interests and prejudices are involved; and there appears to be a suggestion of intellectual dishonesty in the proposal to *believe* when there is not sufficient evidence to convince the reason. In my opinion, however, these objections are based upon a failure to distinguish between different senses of the word "believe." It must be ad-

¹¹⁹ *The Will to Believe*, p. 27.

mitted, I fear, that James himself is partly responsible for these confusions.

There are at least three kinds of "believing." In the first place, one may be said to believe when he feels that he knows. Secondly, belief may be understood in a wholly practical sense. One shows his faith by his works; and it is easy to pass from this principle to the view that faith, or belief, is the action which would normally accompany or result from belief in the first sense. It is this second sense of believing, the acting as if one knew, which James seems to have chiefly in mind when he speaks of a "will to believe."

There is, however, a third sense of the word "believe," which seems to be implied, though not clearly distinguished from the others, in James's exposition. It differs from our first sense in being without real or supposed theoretical justification; and from the second in being an affair of feeling, rather than of will or action. If the first kind of believing is the "*feeling that one knows*," and the second, "*the acting as if one knew*," the third may be said to be "*the feeling as if one knew*."

That this third kind of belief is psychologically possible is a matter of everyday experience. Our feelings are seldom quite appropriate to the theoretical situation. The passenger on the railway train who is nervous and ill at ease because of the fear of a wreck is permitting emotion to outrun the evidence. But the same is true of the passenger who has no feeling of anxiety whatever; for there is *some* danger. And, while the probability of a wreck is not sufficiently great to justify the fears of the one, it is not so small as to justify the utter calm of the other. Belief, in the third sense, the *feeling as one would feel if one had theoretical knowledge which he does not have*, is thus illustrated by our usual freedom from emotional disturbance on a rapidly moving train. We know that a thousand and one things might happen, any one of which might plunge us to almost instant death; we may be theoretically persuaded that there are a given number of

chances in ten million that we will on this particular day be killed in a wreck; we may even allow our minds to dwell upon these chances of destruction; and yet feel as we should feel if the chance were absolutely nil.

This sort of belief is even better illustrated in our social relations. Here, too, the degree of certainty which we feel is not usually the exact degree that would be logically appropriate to the situation. We cannot *prove* that the bank will not fail; that people are telling us the truth; that our best friends will not play us false; that the Causes to which we devote ourselves are really worthy of our devotion. We can have no *intellectual* certainty in regard to these matters; and yet we not only *act* but also *feel* as we should act and feel if we *were* intellectually certain. In a word, our faiths and loyalties habitually outrun the evidence.

In the same way, although we do not *know* that there is a God, or that the world is moving toward a worthy goal, and cannot therefore be said to believe in the existence of God or in the salvability of the world in the first of our three senses of the word "believe," we have the right to believe in the other two senses. We are justified in accepting the existence of God as an assumption in accordance with which to plan our lives; and also in feeling a greater degree of certainty with reference to his existence than is theoretically warranted.

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II.

THE THEOLOGY OF PROFESSOR HENRY HARBAUGH.¹

GEORGE W. RICHARDS.

One hundred years ago three notable men in the Reformed Church were born, Henry Harbaugh, John H. A. Bomberger, Emanuel Vogel Gerhart. Each was born in a Reformed home, educated in Reformed schools, and ordained to the Reformed ministry; one of them, Dr. Harbaugh, was a teacher of theology, and two of them, Dr. Gerhart and Dr. Bomberger, were both president of a college and teacher of theology. In the development of the Reformed Church in the nineteenth century few, if any, played a more prominent part.

This Synod has resolved to commemorate the centennial of the birth of Dr. Harbaugh. With a fine sense of propriety the committee in charge of these services has chosen for consideration at this time the crowning work of his life—Dr. Harbaugh's contribution to the theology of the Reformed Church.

In the Historical Appendix of the pamphlet entitled *Christological Theology*, the inaugural address of Dr. Harbaugh, is the following concise statement: "The Rev. Henry Harbaugh, D.D., of Lebanon, Pa., was elected, by the Synod of the German Reformed Church in the United States, at its annual sessions, held in Carlisle, Pa., in the month of October, A. D. 1863, to the Professorship of Didactic and Practical Theology in the Theological Seminary at Mercersburg, Pa., rendered va-

¹ An address delivered by Professor George W. Richards, D.D., in October, 1917, at Hagerstown, Md., during the annual session of Potomac Synod, at a service commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of the Reverend Professor Henry Harbaugh, D.D.

cant by the resignation of the Rev. Bernard C. Wolff, D.D. A committee, consisting of the Rev. John W. Nevin, D.D., Daniel Zacharias, D.D., Samuel R. Fisher, D.D., Thomas G. Apple, and Daniel Gans, was appointed to install him in his office. The installation took place in the First German Reformed Church, Reading, Pa., on Tuesday morning, the 24th of May, A. D. 1864. The General Convention of the German Reformed Church in the United States, to close the Tercenary Celebration of the Formation and Adoption of the Heidelberg Catechism, was in session at the time. Its proceedings were suspended on the morning of that day, to afford its members an opportunity to participate in the solemnities of the occasion."

In January, 1864, three months after his election and five months before his inauguration, Dr. Harbaugh began to teach in the Seminary. At the request of the board of visitors he took charge of Dr. Schaff's department, who had been granted leave of absence. After Dr. Higbee was appointed to take Dr. Schaff's place, Dr. Harbaugh assumed the work of systematic and practical theology, in April, 1864. For that year his colleagues were Dr. Higbee and William Reily, tutor. For the years following until 1867, the faculty consisted of Dr. Harbaugh, Dr. Higbee, and J. B. Kershner, tutor.

I.

The life of Dr. Harbaugh was the preparation for his professorship. He was by nature endowed, as well as fitted by grace and training, for his task. He was an original, poetic, idealistic, ardent, consecrated man and an indefatigable worker, characteristics which blend in genius. He was child-like in simplicity, gigantic in aversion. He was a lover of peace and concord, and yet ever ready to defend his convictions with "humorous severity" and invincible courage. None knew him better than his almost life-long friend Dr. Schaff, who wrote of him: "Dr. Harbaugh was no common

man. He was endowed with rare gifts of mind and heart, and indomitable energy and perseverance. He had an exuberant vitality, a rich imagination, great power of popularizing and illustrating deep thought, and an unfailing source of genuine, good-natured humor. The defects of his early education he made up by intense application. By the integrity of his character, and the disinterestedness of his labors, he won the esteem, and, by the kindness and generosity of his heart, secured the affection, of all who knew him. His cheerful disposition, rich humor, and an inexhaustible fund of original anecdotes, made him a most agreeable companion."

In his boyhood he was taught in *dem Schul-haus an der Krick*, which his poetic genius afterwards immortalized. At the age of eighteen he answered the call of the West and spent four years in Ohio, then a border state. By hand labor, teaching three winters, and attending the New Hagerstown Academy for two summers, he prepared for college to fulfil the resolution of his boyhood to become a Christian minister. In 1840, with some money in his purse and grit in his soul, he was admitted into the freshman class of Marshall College at Mercersburg, Pa. He gave but a year exclusively to his college work, and for two years combined his collegiate and his theological studies.

He entered the Seminary in a period of transition. Dr. Mayer retired in 1839; Dr. Rauch died in 1841; Dr. Nevin had just come to Mercersburg in 1840; and Dr. Schaff did not arrive until 1844. While Dr. Harbaugh was a seminary student, Dr. Nevin, assisted by an instructor of Hebrew, was the faculty—not much for quantity, in quality rarely excelled. Yet we have reason to think that even Dr. Nevin in the early years of his professorship, burdened by college and seminary work, had not yet matured his theological thinking. Not one of his epoch-making tracts had been published. *The Anxious Bench* appeared in 1843, the *Mystical Presence* in 1844, the *Principle of Protestantism* in 1845, and the first volume of the *Mercersburg Review* in 1849.

From these facts we conclude that Dr. Harbaugh's theological course was both brief and incomplete. He doubtless was imbued with the spirit and ideas of his great master, Dr. Nevin, whom, in his inaugural, he calls "a true son of the fathers and a true father of the sons, and a most faithful *malefactor hæreticorum*." Throughout his life he remained his pupil and was the exponent of his doctrine, though always in a free and original way. Dr. Thomas G. Apple says: "The theology which he had learned in early life from his venerable preceptor, Dr. Nevin, had become fully his own, and enriched by extensive reading and faithful study of German theologians." Dr. Harbaugh was far more self-taught than school-taught. In the years of his ministry, from 1843 to 1864, he never permitted the duties of preacher and pastor, in both of which functions he excelled, to interfere with his scholarly and literary aspirations. He was a constant reader of English and German literature, a specialist in Reformed Church history, secretary of the Liturgical Committee, a masterly expounder of the theology of his school, a devotional writer, and a poet of a high order.

Few of his contemporaries or his successors felt more deeply the irresistible creative impulse of literary genius than Dr. Harbaugh. Even while in Ohio, from the age of nineteen to twenty-three, he wrote at least fifty poems, about one half of which appeared in current publications. He won the honors in a literary contest in the New Hagerstown Academy by an essay on "The Mind of Man." These juvenile efforts were his literary first-fruits which gave promise of a rich and ripe harvest.

At the age of thirty-one he published his first book, entitled *The Sainted Dead*. This was followed by two volumes on *The Future State*, *The Life of Schlatter*, *The Fathers of the Reformed Church*, 2 vols., *The True Glory of Woman*, a volume of *Poems*, *The Birds of the Bible*, *The Golden Censer*, *Union With the Church*, *Child's Catechism*, *Hymns and*

Chants, Youth in Earnest. Not least in quantity and quality were his contributions to the *Guardian*, which he founded, to the *Mercersburg Review*, of which he was editor for about a year, to the *Reformed Messenger*, and to other periodicals.

II.

The birth year of Dr. Harbaugh, 1817, marks the consummation of the Evangelical Union of Prussia and other German States. The two original churches of the Reformation, the Reformed and the Lutheran, were united, and under the name of The Evangelical Union became a state church. The mediational theology, *Vermittelungs Theologie*, was partly the cause and partly the effect of this ecclesiastical movement. It was an attempt to express in theological terms the content of the Christian consciousness which made such a union possible and permanent. It was more than a compromise between Lutheranism and Calvinism. It was an advance beyond both under the leadership of the epoch-making theologian Friederich Schleiermacher. He came to be the father of modern theology because he based his system upon premises differing from those of seventeenth century orthodoxy and of eighteenth century rationalism. He advanced beyond both by a new definition of religion, of Christianity, of theology, and of theological method.

Religion in his view is not a system of doctrine to which men give assent, not a moral code which men obey, not a ritual which men observe. It is primarily "the feeling of absolute dependence on God." This is an essential part of man's being; and out of it, as tree out of root, grow religious doctrine and deed.

The Christian religion is the feeling of absolute dependence as experienced by Jesus Christ and communicated by Him to his disciples. He lived in perfect relation to God, and God in his fulness dwelt in him. The community in whom the Christian consciousness of God is begotten is the church, which

is the medium for the communication of this consciousness to men of all ages and lands. The Christian religion is the life of Christ reproduced in the lives of men. Speculation about Christ may be philosophy or theology, but it is not religion.

Theology is not simply a compilation and organization of doctrines, once for all revealed in the Bible, but the content of the Christian consciousness of a particular time expressed in understandable literary forms. Kattenbusch says: "Schleiermacher will not know of any other conception of theology than this, viz., that it interprets the spiritual experience of the contemporary church." He, therefore, made a distinction between Christ and the Bible, Christianity and theology, life and doctrine.

His theological method was likewise original. Since the days of Melancthon, Protestant dogmatics was presented as a collection of loci or propositions, buttressed by biblical texts, but not organically related. Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre* resembles an organism controlled in all its members by a central principle, constituting it in the true sense of the term a theological system. The formative principle in his system was the Christological—an interpretation of God, man, and the universe through Christ as he is portrayed in the Scriptures and apprehended by the Christian. His theology was essentially a Christology. His method has influenced dogmaticians of every school.

Three distinct theological tendencies diverged from Schleiermacher—the confessional, the mediational, and the liberal. None of these is a servile imitation of the master, yet all of them have been influenced by his spirit and method. Hengstenberg became the champion of a reaction toward orthodoxy. Marheineke and Biedermann, Lipsius and Pfleiderer led the liberals. Prominent among the Mediationalists were Twes-ten, Nitzsch, Rothe, Lange, Dorner, Martensen, Ebrard, Schweizer, Heppe, and Van Oosterzee, all of them household names in the Mercersburg school and quoted or mentioned frequently in the lectures of Dr. Harbaugh.

Moreover the Mediationists could not claim direct kinship with the orthodox Lutheran theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—Chemnitz, Gerhart, Hutter, Quenstedt; nor with the orthodox Reformed theologians of the same period—Calvin, Ursinus, Olevianus, Pareus, Wendelin, and their kind. They preferred to trace their descent through Bengel, Mosheim, Spener, and Calixtus, to Melancthon, the father of Mediationism.

The term mediational defines the aim of the school. It was an attempt to justify, in a theological way, the union of Reformed and Lutheran churches in Germany by emphasizing points of agreement instead of points of difference. Their favorite motto was popularized in this country by Dr. Schaff: "In essentials, unity; in doubtful points, freedom; in all things, love." They tried also to reconcile old dogmas with new science and philosophy, to put old truths into new forms. They did not renounce the confessions, but explained them in an historical rather than in a dogmatic way. They did not deny the right of reason, but escaped rationalism, by assigning reason its proper function alongside of revelation and in religion. They made room for emotion in Christianity, without running into fanaticism, by regarding feeling as "the child of truth and the parent of duty." They shifted emphasis from the sovereignty and justice of God to the fatherhood and love of God. They held, also, Calvin's doctrine of a spiritual real presence in the Lord's Supper, instead of the Zwinglian view of a mere memorial or the Lutheran doctrine of a corporal real presence—a conception on which Calvin and Melancthon agreed. A statement of these aims and doctrines has a familiar sound to the ministers of the Reformed Church, who were trained during the period extending from Dr. Nevin's advent to Mercersburg to Dr. Gerhart's death at Lancaster. In other words the mediational theology of Germany became, with limitations and modifications, the Mercersburg theology in America.

III.

For several reasons the Reformed Church in the United States became the bearer of German theology and philosophy into this country. It was the Church of the Heidelberg Catechism, the most irenic symbol of the Reformation. Its ministers and members were of German and German Swiss stock and continued for a century to cherish German traditions in their new home. They turned in time of need to the Fatherland for professors in college and seminary. They felt themselves, in their religious consciousness, to be different from Puritanism and Methodism. By an extraordinary coincidence the leaders of the first college and the first theological seminary of the Reformed Church were three distinguished scholars who won an international reputation. They were Rauch the philosopher, Schaff the historian, and Nevin the theologian. Each contributed his portion to the theology of Mercersburg. They were exponents of the progressive orthodoxy of the German Mediationists. They had mastered the Scotch and English philosophies and they understood the Puritan and the Methodist types of Christianity in the United States. From their point of view the problem which confronted them is described by Dr. Gerhart, both a pupil and a master of this school, in a statement referring to Dr. Nevin: "As a result of his studies and his own observation, he was convinced that the churches of the Reformation, transplanted to American soil, had in great measure given up their original faith, had come under the power of a spirit foreign to the Reformation symbols, and were really, unwelcome as was the charge, drifting on the broad current of rationalism. The German Reformed Church, with others, had also in a degree forsaken its own original denominational character, and subjected, in the absence of a counteracting force sufficiently strong, to the power of Puritan and Methodist modes of thought, was rapidly undergoing a transformation into the image of a foreign system."

Whether they were right or wrong in their estimate of contemporary Christianity we need not now discuss, but from their point of view the Mercersburg men felt called to protest against errors in doctrine and practice against the antichrist of sect and schism. They purposed to restore the theology, cultus and piety of the Reformation and of the Church Catholic of all ages, and to give the objective, sacramental and churchly factors in Christianity their due; thus to cure the heresies and to heal the schisms growing out of the prevalence of subjective, emotional and rationalistic tendencies in the modern church. In temper they were both polemical and irenical. With Samsonian blows they laid low all heresies and schisms from Cerinthus to Channing. Having finished their task of destruction they paused to take breath, and, with the flush of victory on the cheek, they viewed the slain with keen satisfaction. Then calmly and leisurely, profoundly and grandly, they proceeded to expound the truth as it always was, now is and ever shall be in Christ Jesus. The truth thus proclaimed and accepted by all branches of Christianity, it was confidently assumed, would put an end to the sin of sect and schism and restore the one holy Catholic Church in its pristine purity and power.

While we recognize the influence of German theology on the men of Mercersburg, we must always remember that they were not slavish imitators of any system. Nevin differed sufficiently from Dorner to wage a weighty controversy with a worthy opponent. In reply to the charge of Germanizing, Nevin wrote:² "We honor German learning and thought, and stand largely indebted to them for such views as we have come to have, of men and the world, of Christianity and the Bible. We are not of that class of men who pique themselves on being good philosophers because they have never read a line of Kant and have not the remotest conception of what was dreamed by Fichte and Schelling; or who consider themselves safe theologians because their dogmatic slumbers have never been for a

² *Mercersburg Review*, 1867, p. 63.

moment disturbed by Schleiermacher or the dangerous school of Tübingen. We confess our obligations both to the philosophy and the theologians of Germany."

In the next paragraph he declares his independence of German theology. "With all this high opinion, however, of the German mind and learning, we belong to no German school and have never pretended to follow strictly any German system or scheme of thought. Neither have we been blind at all or insensible to the dangers of a too free or too truthful communication with these foreign forms of thinking. . . . Theory and speculation have been with us subordinate always to the idea of positive Christianity, as an object of faith exhibited to us in the Bible and the history of the actual church." The difference between Dr. Nevin and Professor Dorner, a master of the Mediationists, came to view in the idea of the church, ordination and the Christian ministry.³ On this point Dr. Nevin says: "Here we reach what we feel to be surer and more solid ground than any such Christological studies of themselves furnish; and just because these studies seem too often to stop short of what is involved for faith in the full apprehension of the Christian mystery, as a continuous presence in the world, they are found to be at certain points more or less unsatisfactory in the end to our religious feeling. Here it is that, with all our respect for German divinity, we consciously come to break with it in our thoughts, and feel the necessity of supplementing it with the more practical way of looking at Christianity which we find embodied in the ancient creeds. In this respect we freely admit our theology is more Anglican than German. We stand upon the old creeds. We believe in the Holy Catholic Church."⁴

The help received from the German speculative philosophers, from Kant to Hegel, was the ground for the charge of Germanizing. The Christological idea of Schleiermacher and the Mediationists was the ground for the charge by some of

³ *Mercersburg Review*, Oct., 1867, p. 629.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Oct., 1867, p. 632.

Lutheranizing and by others of rationalizing. The high regard for the sacraments, ordination and the Christian ministry was the ground for the charge of Anglicizing. The restoration of the ancient creeds in their relation to the modern church, the emphasis of authority vested in the church rather than in the private judgment of the individual, and the theory of the essential unity and continuity of the church, were the grounds for the charge of Romanizing. Their opponents were not slow in framing and pressing these charges against them. Some of their too rigorously consistent disciples outdid their masters and forsook Heidelberg for Oxford or for Rome.

To summarize in a paragraph what might be expanded into a chapter or a book, the following were the factors entering into the making of the Mercersburg theology: (1) The genius of the Reformed Church in the Palatinate, which is the soul of the Heidelberg Catechism; (2) the spirit of the German Reformed Church in America in the eighteenth century, the confessional and churchly tendencies of Boehm and the Cœtus predominating; (3) the conditions of American Protestantism in the early national period; (4) the philosophy and theology of Germany brought to this country by Rauch and Schaff, and mastered by Nevin and his pupils; (5) a blend of the best German, English and American scholarship in the leaders of the Reformed Church in the nineteenth century; (6) the conception of the church as the perpetuation of the presence of the glorified divine-human Christ in history; (7) the influence of controversy, led by Nevin, with various types of Christianity from Romanism to Irvingism. As a teacher in the Mercersburg school these factors played a large part in Dr. Harbaugh's theology.

IV.

A word in reference to the specific authorities and sources upon which we shall have to base our study. His predecessors in the professorship of didactic and practical theology were Mayer, Nevin and Wolff; his successors, Gerhart, Noss and Herman. The writings of Nevin especially had a profound

influence on Harbaugh, probably more after he was in the ministry than while he was a theological student. A copy in manuscript by Dr. Bausman of the "Lectures on Theology" by J. W. Nevin, 628 pages, in the year 1851-52, is in the archives of the Historical Society of the Reformed Church in the United States. It is an invaluable source for a study of the beginnings of the Mercersburg theology. The teaching of Professor Wolff was based on the dogmatics of Ebrard, of whom Dr. Harbaugh in his inaugural says: "Dr. Ebrard, whose system of Christian Dogmatics has for some years been the principal text-book in the Theological Seminary at Mercersburg, and has been justly held in high estimation by my venerable predecessor, Dr. Wolff, strongly and decidedly urges the right and the necessity of seeking the full harmony and ultimate sense of Reformed theology on some advanced ground." In an editorial on "The Late Editor," Thomas G. Apple, in the *Mercersburg Review*, April, 1868, says: Dr. Harbaugh "had selected Lange as his favorite author, yet his lectures give abundant evidence that he did not rest satisfied with merely retailing other men's thoughts." Dr. Schaff, in his *Propædæutic*, describes Lange's Dogmatik as "full of original thoughts and fancies." A copy of this work in three volumes is in the library of Franklin and Marshall College, presented by the Rev. L. K. Evans, D.D., who purchased it in Berlin, Prussia, October 9, 1865, and later presented it to the college library.

The primary sources for a study of Dr. Harbaugh's theology are his inaugural, entitled "Christological Theology," 77 pages; a verbatim copy of his lectures on Dogmatics, 397 pages, and on Practical Theology, 211 pages; both in the archives of the Historical Society of the Reformed Church. On the title page of this manuscript is the following inscription: "These lectures were transcribed by me from Dr. Harbaugh's copy during my course in the Theological Seminary at Mercersburg (1868-1871), Joel T. Rossiter." At the close of the course on Dogmatics is the following: "Finished tran-

scribing at 9½ o'clock on the evening of Nov. 9th, 1870. J. T. Rossiter. *Labor Tediosus!!!!*"

Thanks to the patient plodding scribe forty-seven years after the completion of his task. This copy is all the more valuable, not merely because it is legible, but because it contains in marginal notes and in eighty-four pages of Addenda the comments of Dr. Gerhart, who for some years in the classroom made use of the lectures of his predecessor. These lectures in print would cover two volumes of the size of Professor William Adams Brown's *Christian Theology in Outline*, 468 pages. This material was prepared, fit for publication, in three years—a truly colossal achievement!

V.

We shall now consider the distinctive characteristics of Harbaugh's theology as found in his lectures in manuscript. To do this we shall have to consider his style, presuppositions, controlling principle, his conception of the author of salvation and of the appropriation of salvation.

1. His style is clear, concise, logical and pervaded by a subtle poetic charm, such as we should expect from the editor of the *Guardian* and the author of *Das Hemweh Lied* and "Jesus, I Live to Thee." Yet he is capable of using all the perplexing terminology of the scholastic dogmaticians. The headings of four of his main divisions are the following: Christological Theanthropology, Theanthropological Christology, Theanthropological Theanthropology. To those who hear and understand these are terms rich in meaning, terms that clearly differentiate from the orthodoxy of the seventeenth century and from the rationalism of the eighteenth. Upon those who simply hear they have a soporific effect inducing a state of blissful inattention. The label, however, is often far more abstruse than the contents. To illustrate how the poet at times speaks through the theologian, I shall cite but a single passage from the section entitled Cosmological Theanthropology. He speaks of man as the crown of the natural world, saying:

"The elements are all sublimated, refined and raised to their highest character as they thus come under the laws and forces of a higher order of life and are used in the physical structure of this last, highest and noblest son of creation. Though the constituents of the human body are matter still, it is matter intelligized and spiritualized. On no crystal, on no glassy surface, yea, in no star of heaven, does the light of God play as in the refined fluid of the human eye. On no leaf, flower, petal, wing of bird or skin of animal is there such an etherealized flush of life as that which is seen upon the human countenance. In no animal organization do we find anything that approaches the multifarious free flexibility and plasticity which is revealed in the wonderful capacity of the human organization. In man life is almost matter and matter is almost life. Spirit is almost form and form is almost spirit."

He often cites references, but rarely quotes authorities at length. His were not the hands of Harbaugh and the voice of Lange. He digested his reading, thought profoundly, and words flowed from his pen with the stamp of his individuality. A criterion of the philosophic mind is the power of differentiation possessed by few men as by John Calvin. Harbaugh had the gift of defining in terse phrase the tenets of other systems and the distinctive doctrines of his own. One cannot help but feel that it would have been a great advantage for the theology of Mercersburg if it had been published in the style and within the limits of Dr. Harbaugh's lectures.

2. The presuppositions of a system of theology largely determine its character. These are the definition of religion, of the Bible, of dogmatics and of the theory of knowledge—*i. e.*, the relation between revelation and reason, faith and knowledge. Religion he defines as "the consciousness of God in man, a spiritual instinct out of which grows faith." This is in accord with Nevin's definition, who accepts Schleiermacher's view that religion is the feeling of absolute dependence. He differed from both orthodoxy and rationalism, which resolve religion into doctrines about God and rules ordained by God.

Faith in this view becomes largely intellectual assent and moral endeavor—far removed indeed from trust in a person spontaneously blossoming into a life of hope and love.

This conception of religion determined his idea of Christianity. It is not primarily supernaturally revealed dogma, law or ritual, but a life—the life of Christ in men. The new life comes to light in all human relations, physical, intellectual, moral, social, political, æsthetic. The revelation of God, therefore, in the universe and of Christ in men is made in forms as manifold as the functions of nature and the activities of humanity.

In accord with this view of religion the Bible is defined as “the record of the consciousness of God in man and of his dealings with men.” It is not a divine oracle nor a human creation. It is a record in a variety of literary forms of what men in times past have seen, and heard and handled of the Word of Life. The life of God in the soul precedes the word of God in prose and poetry, in history and prophecy. He differed widely from the theory of verbal infallibility on the one hand and of rationalistic denial of inspiration on the other. Perchance far more than the author knew, was he in sympathy in his theory of the Scriptures with the best theological thinkers of to-day.

The office of theology is “to organize Christian truth as it has lodgment in the general consciousness of the Church.” Here he is true to his definition of religion, Christianity and the Bible. The source of theology is the divine life in men, primarily in Jesus Christ and derivatively in his followers through the ages. Contrast this definition with that of Dr. Charles Hodge,⁵ who says: “The object of theology is to systematize the facts of the Bible and to ascertain the principles and general truths which these facts involve.” For Hodge the one and only source of theology is the Bible. To systematize its facts is to finish the task of the theologian. Dr. Harbaugh also accepts the Bible as a source of dogmatics, but holds it

⁵ *Theology*, I, page 18.

subordinate to the revelation of God in Christ, a revelation becoming ever clearer in the consciousness of the Christian Church to the end of time. Hodge spoke of a revelation of God *to* men; Harbaugh spoke of a revelation of God *in* men. In this respect he is far closer to Professor William Adams Brown than to Dr. Charles Hodge. In defining the doctrines of the Christian faith Professor Brown says: "We shall understand by them the abiding convictions about God, men and their relations growing out of God's historic revelation in Christ, and verifying themselves progressively in Christian experience."⁶ Both Dr. Harbaugh and Dr. Brown have a vital, progressive and ethical conception of religion, revelation, the Bible and theology; the conception of Dr. Hodge is mechanical, static and miraculous. The former is Christocentric, the latter is Bibliocentric.

Dr. Harbaugh's theory of knowledge, involving the relation of revelation and reason, is a necessary outcome of his view of religion. Man knows God not by a process of reasoning or by an act of will. Preceding thought and volition is man's "instinct for God." "By instinct we mean that native activity of subjective life which goes out spontaneously after that in the objective world which its own nature needs." "Its ground is the original essential relation of the divine and human, of God and man. The human, as a dependent being, finds God necessary to his very being."

He is in agreement with Kant in denying the ability of the pure reason to find God. Like Kant he also gives up the philosophic proofs of the existence of God, the ontological, the cosmological and the teleological. Dr. Schaff tells us how an American student in the classroom of Professor Ritschl magnified in broken German the importance of natural theology, and how Ritschl startled the young American by the cool reply: "So ein Ding gibt's ja gar nicht."⁷ Dr. Harbaugh has but one argument for the existence of God left, and that is that man

⁶ *Christian Theology in Outline*, page 1.

⁷ *Propædæutic*, page 355.

cannot get along without God. He differs from Kant, however, and from the rationalistic supernaturalists from Thomas Aquinas to Quenstedt, in putting the revelation of God in Christ, apprehended by faith, in place of the pure reason and the practical reason, of the Bible and of tradition. This he calls the Christological theory of knowledge, which he defines as follows: "He only can know God who knows Christ as the Son of God. Hence the degree of our knowledge of God is the degree of our knowledge of Christ. Thus our theology must have a Christological principle." Dr. Harbaugh was not a Ritschlian, and yet he harbored tendencies which may readily develop into the Ritschlian theory of knowledge.

3. Next in import in a dogmatic system is its central idea which dominates the several parts as the vital principle of a tree controls stem and branch, leaf and fruit. This he defined in his inaugural address as the Christological principle, a term current in Mercersburg since the days of Nevin, and in Europe since the time of Schleiermacher. The second person in the Trinity, united with generic humanity in the incarnation, having two natures, without confusion and without separation, joined in one divine-human person, is the central and formative fact through which God, man, the universe, sin, redemption, sanctification and the final judgment are realized and explained. From this point of view he differentiates his system from other schemes of theology in the history of the church. He recounts and characterizes them in a paragraph in his Inaugural: "Thus is our salvation principally and generically, not in a Judaistic-Ebionitic ethical law, not in a pagan, mythical philosopheme, not in a reheading of grace in an earthly, human vicariate, not in word or in doctrine, not in the subjective, justifying genesis of faith, not in an abstract divine decree, not in the autonomic apprehending energies of the human will, not in an extra human arrangement effected by the acts of Christ, nor in any other scheme whatsoever which proposes to dip for us the cup of salvation from the stream *below* its perennial fountain in Jesus Christ. He who

stops short of the divine-human person and the miraculous immaculate birth of the Son of God and the Son of Mary has found an inadequate and relatively false principle of salvation" (page 42).

To give Harbaugh's theology its setting in relation to the present, as he defined it in relation to the past, we must consider two distinct interpretations of the Christological principle itself—a distinction which was not made in the author's lifetime but which needs to be understood to see the difference between the theology of Mercersburg and the theology of Lancaster. According to the earlier theory Christ is represented as the incarnate Logos, a metaphysical instead of an historical conception of Jesus. Thus the metaphysical idea controls the historical person and becomes the regulative principle of theological thought, instead of the historical and experimental. So Professor Harbaugh held. According to the later theory the historical Jesus becomes the way by which we gain insight into the character and purpose of God, from whom He came, and so we are able to understand the meaning of the world in which we live and the destiny to which we are called. Jesus is like God and God is like Jesus. Not through a metaphysical proposition about person and natures, but through the historical Jesus, we comprehend the meaning of God, man and the universe, and are brought under the power of his redemptive and sanctifying purpose. So Professor Herman holds. In the *REFORMED CHURCH REVIEW*, October, 1915, page 480, he says: "Modern dogmatics has but one constructive principle, viz., the Christological. But the Christ from whom it derives its revealing light on God, the world, man, sin, salvation, etc., is not the logos, the image and expression of a transcendental metaphysical deity, but the historical Jesus, in whom dwelt the fullness of the Father, full of grace and truth. And its faith in Christ does not rest upon any metaphysical fact connected with his person, but upon his spiritual supremacy and moral leadership." The theology now taught in the Theological Seminary of your Synod is still Christological, but Christo-

logical in an historical and ethical sense, not in a metaphysical and philosophical sense.

4. It remains for us to consider the source and the appropriation of salvation, both of which give character to a theological system, and are defined in a unique way by Dr. Harbaugh. He was orthodox in distinction from rationalism; in harmony with the ancient creeds and the evangelical Reformers in his view of the Trinity and the person of Christ, in his emphasis on atonement, justification and faith. Yet defining the author of salvation and the way of appropriating salvation in the light of the Christological idea, he differed from the prevalent orthodoxy of his age, a difference which appeared especially in his view of salvation and of the manner of its appropriation.

Salvation was not the result of revelation of doctrine about God and man, nor of a promulgation of divine law for man's observance, nor of any plan of redemption introduced as a remedial device after man's fall. "It is, of course," he says, "doctrine, morals, and redemption, but rather as a result of Christianity than as its very nature." Salvation in principle is Jesus Christ, the union of God and man in one person without confusion of substance. This is the ultimate basis of all at-one-ment. The union was effected by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin and was organically and progressively actualized from birth to glorification, without violence to the laws of the divine or the human nature. His redemptive power was manifested with the progressive unfolding of his life, at each stage from conception to resurrection overcoming the power of sinful nature and of the organized kingdom of Satan. The author of our salvation was made perfect through suffering. Thus in its objective form salvation was a process, not an isolated act, as for example his birth, or doctrine or death. In the life of believers this process is repeated in that they die with him, rise with him and live with him. *Christ's obedience and merits are made over to the believer and yet not forensically, but only as his life becomes their life, his will their will.*

Moreover, Jesus Christ is the head of a new creation, from

whom proceed saving and sanctifying powers. In Him humanity is recapitulated, reheaded and reunited with God, a favorite theory of Irenæus. The race, therefore, is saved in a generic way in Christ as it was generically lost in Adam. The incarnation, however, was not merely an after-thought of God when man had fallen. Its purpose was not merely redemptive or remedial to overcome sin. As the beginning and the end, the head of "all things," the one "in whom all things consist," he was so related to man before the fall that both God's nature and man's nature would have required an incarnation for the perfection of the race though man had not sinned. He would have become Lord and teacher of man, though he would not have needed to be his Saviour. "For the incarnation of the God-man must be regarded as the perfection and crown of creation, rather than as the mere effect of the sin of man." This theory of incarnation was expounded in grand style by Dorner in his *History of the Person of Christ* and by Dr. Gerhart in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

The redemption which is wrought out in Jesus Christ must be appropriated by the individual. Only then is the work of salvation complete. In answer to the question, How then are we brought into union with the life of Christ? Dr. Harbaugh says: "The Holy Ghost mediates Christ's life to us; but He does it by means." "He works in and through Christ's institutions." The primary means "by which Christ's life finds lodgment in us is the sacrament of baptism, 'the washing of regeneration.'" "By baptism are we brought into communion with Christ's life, incorporated into his body the Church. In it our sin is remitted and the Holy Ghost is given." "Thus the life of Christ is as yet undeveloped but has now a *germinal* beginning in us. This life of Christ apprehending us is apprehended on our part by faith. Faith hangs fast to that life and makes it more and more our own." The germinal life imparted by baptism is nurtured by the word and the eucharist, until the new-born babe in Christ becomes a full-grown man in Christ. "The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was instituted

for the nourishment and perfection of the new life; it is the bearer of his glorified life to man 'until he come.'"

In place of the forensic idea of justification, the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer, Dr. Harbaugh bases justification on the mystical union (*unio mystica*), which he claims to be a heritage of Reformed theology. To use his own words: "This mystical union is one-ness with the life of Christ. It is accomplished by the Holy Ghost on the divine side and by faith on the human side, both acting in unison. The Holy Ghost mediates Christ's life to us and faith receives it. The mystical union brings us into union not only with Christ's divinity, but also with His humanity—the human life, *that which in him was perfected, justified, and glorified in the spirit, and hence our sharing in it actually makes our human life justifiable, truly and without sham or fiction.* Through union with his humanity we also become partakers of his divine nature and thus we become the very righteousness of God." This is a serious attempt to overcome the defects of the forensic theory of imputation of Christ's righteousness by the theory of sacramental and ethical appropriation of his divine-human life.

At this point appears the difference of view in the manner of appropriating the benefits of Christ, as held by Dr. Harbaugh on the one hand, and by the Puritan and Methodist churches of his time on the other. The individual is not first converted by the word of God or by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit in answer to prayer and then brought into the church. So the Puritans and Methodists taught. But he is first brought, through the sacrament of baptism, into the bosom of the divine-human institution, the Church, which is the organ and form of Christ's life in humanity. Then the new-born Christian is nurtured by the word of God and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Here doubtless the suspicion of Anglicizing and of Romanizing was awakened in the minds of his contemporaries. Here, also, one may clearly see the significance of the so-called organic, historical, churchly, sacra-

mental, and educational method of salvation proclaimed by the Mercersburg school.

VI.

What shall we say, finally, of the theology of Dr. Harbaugh? His successor, Dr. Gerhart, made use of his lectures in the class-room, but from the beginning criticized and revised them. In his introductory lecture, Dr. Gerhart pays tribute to the excellence of Dr. Harbaugh's system and then says by way of criticism: "The deficiencies appear chiefly on the anthropological and soteriological side of dogmatics and by consequence in the work of Christ as related to sin and the curse. This involves also a measure of incompleteness in the idea of God. God is properly viewed as the living God whose essence is love. But in this view the ethical element or the true conception of the divine holiness is not asserted with sufficient force. In the idea of the Christian salvation the judicial and forensic element is in great measure wanting. Were this one-sided view developed logically into all its consequences it would run out into and materially modify the positive conception of revelation, of the economy of grace, of the church, and the sacraments, and thus eventually detach the science of dogmatic theology from the solid foundation which it possesses in the œcumenical creeds. Had the author lived to reconstruct his lectures we have reason to believe that this radical defect would have disappeared. Indications are at hand in those which he revised. As it is, however, the main defect remains, and it becomes necessary to complement as far as we can, in a more formal manner than has hitherto been done, your course of theological study." With corrections and modification, and in a wholly different style, the ideas of Dr. Harbaugh and of the Mercersburg school were wrought out in monumental form in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* by Dr. Gerhart.

Perhaps the question of greater interest now is: How is the theology of Dr. Harbaugh and of his school related to the theology of to-day? It is clear that it differed from con-

temporary Calvinism, Lutheranism, and Arminianism. We may modestly claim that it was an advance beyond these systems. While he advanced beyond the static orthodoxy of his time, he did not, however, reach the positions of conservative liberalism of our day. He simply prepared the way for it. He represented only a stage in the process of historical development, anticipating and forecasting the direction of future progress, and yet in many respects he was a child of the past. That some of his doctrines are no longer held, neither by his descendants in the Reformed Church nor by Protestants generally, must be conceded. The glory of Dr. Harbaugh was not in the establishment of a fixed and an infallible system looking toward the past, but in finding God's revelation in living principles, incarnated in a person and needing new applications to the changing conditions of a changing world.

Since his day, new issues have arisen; new points of view have been taken; the Christian consciousness has undergone changes; the emphasis in theology has been shifted; and the scientific and critical method has taken the place of the philosophical and speculative in theological studies. The Mediationists have given way to the Ritschlians. The *religions-geschichtliche Schule* has followed close on the heels of the Ritschlians. These changes are profoundly felt in Europe and America.

Biblical criticism was largely ignored by Harbaugh and his school. Since his death it has found its way into the classroom, the pulpit, and even the pew. The Antichrist, according to Nevin, was the sect spirit in Protestantism. The Antichrist of present-day orthodoxy is higher criticism. It is not now so much a question of sects and schisms in the Church as of sects and schisms in the Bible. The evolutionary hypothesis of Darwin has left its impress on kindergarten and university, and changed the mental habits of mankind. The application of the biological and the psychological method in the study of religion and of social phenomena has revolutionized biblical

exegesis and church history. The Ritschlian theory of knowledge and interpretation of the essence of Christianity and of the origin of ancient Catholicism have disintegrated dogmatic systems and have forced men to theological reconstruction. Sociology is modifying the conventional curriculum of theological schools, and is raising new issues for ministers, professors and synods.

In the new conditions of our time, the formulas of Harbaugh are no longer pertinent and adequate, and yet his labors have not been in vain. Theology is still Christocentric, though the emphasis is laid not primarily on the constitution of Christ's person, but on the contents of his consciousness or on his teachings imbedded in the gospel narrative. The Church is now represented not so much as a divine order of grace and a sacramental institution, but as a fellowship of brethren saved by grace, and an association for Christian service. In the light of their historical origin the mystery of the sacraments does not consist in a unique, divine-human presence and operation other than that in the gospel, but in a symbolical representation and confirmation of the truths of the gospel. Nor is the Apostles' Creed regarded as a necessary Christological unfolding of the eternal verities latent in the Incarnation, but as a statement, gradually taking form, of the things believed in the ancient Catholic Church.

Let it be granted, then, that Dr. Harbaugh's system is no longer held and taught in schools and churches. Many of its principles and ideals, however, have survived and have made the transition to later positions natural and easy. The idealistic view of the world, with emphasis on divine immanence, the conception of the universe as an organism, the genetic relation of nature and history, the recognition of the principle of development in all forms of life, the primacy of the generic in the life of the individual, and the objectivity and reality of universal concepts—these ideas still live and move in current thought and have a formative influence on theology.

The Christocentric principle prepared the way for the cry

"Back to Christ." The historical conception of religion and the Bible enabled men, without jeopardizing their faith, to apply the principles of literary criticism to the Scriptures. The doctrine of the self-authenticating power of the truth and of Christian consciousness freed men from the bondage of scriptural and confessional literalism and paved the way for the "religion of the spirit" in place of "religions of authority." The theory of evolution is not offensive to men who have been trained to think according to the theory of historical development. The demand for creed revision and readjustment in theology in the light of new conditions is not considered an evidence of apostasy and scepticism, but a sign of progress, by those who were taught that Christianity is historical and has to come into vital relation to the forms of life of various nations and ages. The attempt to reconcile science and revelation, criticism and inspiration, sociology and theology, freedom and authority, is therefore considered a perennial task of the Church. The theory of Christian nurture in contrast to "revival rupture" lends itself readily to the scheme of religious education. The present demand for reverence, dignity, and beauty in worship was answered by the liturgical ideals of the Order of Worship and the Golden Censer. The recognition of the essential oneness of the Church in all ages furnished a sound basis for church union and church federation.

Enough, however, has been cited to show the mediational function of Harbaugh and his school. Wherever their principles found acceptance, whether through Mercersburg, Andover, Cambridge or New Haven, there the advance from a fixed to a progressive orthodoxy was made without violent conflict. The transition was an evolution and not a revolution. But where the new Protestantism was grafted directly on the stem of supernaturalism, it either has been cast off as a foreign substance, or has become a heterogeneous and spurious growth. If, then, Mercersburg theology was a comparatively small factor in the process of reconciliation between German

and American thought and life, and between the old Protestantism and the new, the lives and labors of great men, in an obscure mountain village, were not spent for naught.

Yes, Dr. Harbaugh's theology "has had its day and ceased to be." It is buried in part in the notebooks of his students, it lives in part in the mind and heart of his Church. Long after Harbaugh, the theologian, is forgotten and his lectures have faded from the manuscript, the eternal ideals for which he lived and for which he died will find their way into the souls of men as a life-giving spirit, when they sing:

"Jesus, I live to Thee,
The loveliest and best;
My life in Thee, thy life in me,
In thy blest love I rest.

Jesus, I die to Thee,
Whenever death shall come;
To die in Thee is life to me
In my eternal home.

Whether to live or die,
I know not which is best;
To live in Thee is bliss to me,
To die is endless rest.

Living or dying, Lord,
I ask but to be thine;
My life in Thee, thy life in me,
Makes heaven forever mine."

III.

THE THEOLOGY OF PROFESSOR EMANUEL V. GERHART.

THEODORE F. HERMAN.

The year 1817 witnessed the birth of three men who were destined to exercise a profound influence upon the thought and life of the Reformed Church in the United States. This triumvirate consisted of John H. A. Bomberger, Henry Harbaugh and Emanuel Vogel Gerhart. They were remarkable men, all of them, who in different ways, though with equal sincerity and loyalty, served the church of their birth. We do well to observe this centenary of their birth with appropriate celebrations. They have so recently passed from the scene of their labors that there are those here who knew all of them personally and intimately. Hence the memory of their achievements is fresh and green among us, and the sweet fragrance of their godly life lingers in many a heart. They are not, to us, mere historic characters whom we analyze and catalogue critically and coldly. On the other hand, we are far away from the heat of their conflicts and from the noise of the theological warfare of their day. Time has given us the perspective necessary for an unprejudiced judgment of their labors.

I am especially glad to speak to you to-day on the theology of Dr. Gerhart, and thus to assist in commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of one of the greatest sons of our church and of a faithful minister of Jesus Christ. Glad, because he was my first teacher of Christian theology, at whose feet and in whose home I had my earliest glimpses into the infinite riches of the Gospel of Christ; glad also because in

my closer association with him as his amanuensis I learned to know that it was his heart made him a theologian; there being added to my respect for the great teacher my love for the good man. Glad, finally, because I am humbly mindful of the fact that my election as his successor was in accordance with his own hopes and desires. Thus I count it a privilege to speak to you for a while on the theology of Dr. Gerhart. Let me preface my address with a brief review of the biographical data of his career.

Dr. Gerhart was descended from sturdy Pennsylvania German ancestors. His great-grandfather emigrated from Alsace to Pennsylvania in 1730 and settled in Bucks County. His grandfather was a farmer, and his father, Isaac Gerhart, a minister of the Reformed Church. Dr. Gerhart was born in Freeburg, Pa., June 13, 1817. He received his early education from his father, but at sixteen he became a pupil in the high school at York which the Reformed Church had then established, whose principal was the Rev. F. A. Rauch. When, in the fall of 1835, the school was removed to Mercersburg, Emanuel Gerhart was one of the eighteen students who accompanied their alma mater, and when, during the winter of 1836, the school developed into a college, he became a member of the first sophomore class of Marshall College. He graduated in 1838 and then he entered the Theological Seminary at Mercersburg and completed his studies in 1841 under Drs. Rauch, Mayer and Nevin. After his licensure, he served the church as minister and missionary in the East and in the West until 1851, when the Synod of Ohio elected him president of Heidelberg College and professor of systematic theology in the Seminary at Tiffin. In 1855 he was elected first president of Franklin and Marshall College and professor of mental and moral philosophy. In 1868 he was elected to the chair of systematic theology in the seminary of the Reformed Church, located at Mercersburg, which moved to Lancaster in 1871. This position he held to the day of his death in 1904. Only

those who knew Dr. Gerhart personally, or were associated with him, can read into this bare sketch of a long and busy life the tremendous vigor and success with which he filled these various positions of teacher, preacher, pastor, president and missionary. Besides his official duties, Dr. Gerhart wrote extensively on theology and philosophy. Together with Dr. Schaff he edited the *Mercersburg Review* and contributed numerous weighty articles to its pages. He also became the author of several books, the chief of which are the two volumes of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

Dr. Gerhart, as a man, would pass every test of sterling Christian manhood—physical, mental, moral and spiritual. He combined, as few men, the simple piety of a child with the insight of a philosopher and the learning of a scholar. He was a great scholar without being a recluse; a philosopher without arrogance; a Christian without guile. But this is not the time or place to speak of these things. For us of the Reformed Church he was a great historic character, who in his life and work summed up the origin and growth of our educational institutions, and also the rise, development and consummation of the Mercersburg School of Theology. His student life reached back to the days of Rauch, who was his first teacher in philosophy and theology. He was first the student and then the companion of Nevin. He was a co-worker with Schaff, Harbaugh and Apple, all of whom contributed largely to the theological movement known as the Mercersburg Theology. Thus Dr. Gerhart lived through the creative and controversial stages of this movement, absorbed its principles and assisted in their elaboration and definition. And he became its great constructive genius, for it fell to his lot to reduce the thought of that school to a scientific form, first in lectures to students in the Seminary, and finally in the massive volumes of the *Institutes*. If his teachings excited less attention than those of Nevin, Schaff and Harbaugh, it was because he wrought and taught in the constructive, and not in the controversial, age of the Mercersburg movement; in the quiet of the closet and

classroom rather than in the heat of public debate. But no man can overestimate the deep and lasting impression which Dr. Gerhart made on the life and thought of the Reformed Church as the teacher of twelve academic generations of her ministers. Yea, his influence extended far beyond the border of his Church into other denominations. It is being felt to-day.

In forming an estimate of Dr. Gerhart's theology we may confine our study exclusively to the two volumes of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. His other writings on theological and philosophical topics, in the *Mercersburg Review* and elsewhere, would rival in size the *Institutes*, if they were published in book form. But they are chips from the same busy workshop that finally produced this *opus magnum*. They breathe the same spirit, they proclaim the same fundamental principles, they pursue the same scientific method, and they lead to the same conclusions. In the long years of Dr. Gerhart's productive life one may, indeed, observe an ever-deepening apprehension of his constructive principles. But, from the beginning to the end of his theological career, there is not an iota of change in his position, not even a readjustment of emphasis. Dr. Gerhart lived and moved strictly within a system of theology whose boundaries were fixed from the very beginning. And the ripest formulation of this system is found in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

The two volumes of these *Institutes* contain almost 1700 pages. They are divided into nine books, treating, respectively, the great doctrines of our Christian faith, beginning with the doctrine on God and ending with the doctrine on the last things. The first two books are devoted to the study of the sources of theological knowledge, and to a presentation of the Christian idea or principle of Christian doctrine. Each book contains, in turn, numerous chapters, and each chapter many paragraphs. The whole of it is a magnificent monument to the faith, learning and industry of its author. One might even wish, for the sake of its future usefulness, that the *Institutes* had been issued in briefer form. Yet the work compels one's

admiration, just as it is, for its web of pure logic and for its woof of exalted thought. Thus, in former days, men built Gothic cathedrals to glorify God. From solid foundations these wonderful structures rose to massive heights, and yet the least detail of arched window or vaulted roof or fretted pillar was wrought out with loving care and wonderful skill. So it is with these *Institutes* of Dr. Gerhart. There does not seem to be a sentence in these massive volumes that was hastily written. There are paragraphs that soar into the heights of metaphysical speculation, and others that sound the depths of mystic faith. But none is vague in meaning or slovenly in structure. Thus the external form and symmetry of the *Institutes* match their internal strength. Learned, logical, formal, the style of the book is the proper garment of its thought. There is no artistry here of clever phrasing and brilliant rhetoric, but solid architecture; not pretty ornament, but noble argument moving majestically from premise to conclusion. I am certain that during the last century America has produced no greater work of its kind than the *Institutes*. It was not only the first complete system of theology published by a minister of the Reformed Church in the United States, but it is also one of the greatest systems published within the Reformed Church since her birth, four hundred years ago. It is no less logical than Calvin's *Institutes*, and far more Christological; it shares the ethical and practical interest of Melancthon's early *Loci Communes*, and it surpasses that first Protestant treatise on dogmatics in the breadth of its spirit. There are few similar books in which one may find the same blending of heart and head, of faith and reason, of mystic depth and pragmatic interest.

To understand the theological system enshrined in these two volumes three things, it seems to me, are necessary. We must know its origin, its essence and its results. Whence came it, what was it and what has it accomplished? These questions must now, briefly, engage our attention.

1. *The Origin of Dr. Gerhart's Theology.*—The historical antecedents of the Mercersburg theology are found in Ger-

many. There its foundations were laid long before the birth of Dr. Gerhart. Many men helped to build these foundations, poets, philosophers, scholars and theologians; and many movements assisted in forming the superstructure of thought and life, rationalism, romanticism, idealism and regenerated Protestantism. But its great architects were Kant, Schleiermacher and Hegel. Out of the chaos of the Napoleonic wars, born in the travail of history, there arose in Germany a new world-view, whose creative and formative factors were Kant's critical and ethical idealism, Schleiermacher's regenerated Protestantism and Hegel's philosophy of history.

In the year 1817, Dr. Gerhart's birth-year, this new world-view was making itself felt in Germany in every sphere of life. Its distinctive characteristic was its passionate interest in life, not in theological theories or philosophical questions about life, but in the concrete processes of life itself as it centered in human personality and as it ran through the eons of history, reaching back to remote beginnings and pointing forward to wonderful consummations. And its fundamental principle was the idea of historical development. Animated by this spirit, men sought a formula that should establish the unity of life, harmonious with its immense diversity. Its ground lay in the past, shrouded in mystery, and its goal in dim future ages. Was there a divine power in whose beneficent and omnipotent purpose both the ground and the goal of history had their eternal warrant? Formerly the world had been regarded as the program of God; now men thought in terms of processes, not programs. They observed past transitions and present tendencies, and they sought passionately for the assurance that the road of historic development led to a worthy terminal in time and eternity. That was the spirit of the times one hundred years ago; the new *Weltanschauung* that was regenerating and rejuvenating Germany.

Fortunately, the Christian Church was not wholly impervious to this new spirit. There were Christian scholars in whom it was incarnate. They shared the aims and purposes

of Kant and Hegel, but they saw their fulfillment in the historic revelation of God in Jesus Christ, and they sought to commend the Christian religion to their age as the only satisfaction of its deepest yearnings. Chief among these men was Schleiermacher, who superseded the rationalism and pietism of his time, which were equally defective in their intellectual conception of Christianity as a system of doctrine and a sum of precepts, by his new conception of the nature of religion. Religion, Schleiermacher held, was life, not doctrine or precepts. And the Christian religion was the life of Jesus Christ creatively active in history and organically present in the consciousness of Christian believers who formed the Church. It was something wholly different from theology and morality, from doctrine and duty. This life came first. It preceded morality as the root does the fruit. It antedated and conditioned theology, which was merely the effort of men to interpret this life of the Christian religion in the thought forms of a given age. Thus theology must needs change and develop with our changing human civilization. But through all successive changes of theology ran the constant dynamic of the Christian religion, the living fellowship between God and man creatively established by Jesus Christ, and organically continued in the communion of the Christian Church. Here, then, was what the age dimly sought. This magnificently new, and true, conception of the Christian religion had in it the potency and the promise of conquering the new age, not by crushing its spirit, but by satisfying it. Here was given the possibility of reuniting in one orb the two Kantian hemispheres of life, the realms of pure and practical reason, the natural and the supernatural, science and theology, reason and religion, man and God; for in Jesus Christ man had the principle which interpreted God, man and history. Here also lay the unity of idea and history sought by Hegel. In Christ was the realization of the divine idea, and in history the consummation of Christ. Thus Schleiermacher was, indeed, a child of his age. He understood its spirit and responded nobly to its call. But

the message which he proclaimed to it was not of his age. He had found it anew in the ancient Gospel of Jesus. It was God's message of salvation.

And it is here, in Schleiermacher, that we must seek the historic antecedents of Dr. Gerhart's theology. The Mercersburg theology was a lineal descendant of this regenerated Protestantism of Germany. In being transplanted to our land it was at the same time transformed in many respects. But in spite of these not unimportant modifications, due in part to the native genius of the leaders of the Mercersburg movement, and in part also to the practical conditions confronting them, their theology remained true in its essence to its generic type. And this type was the awakening and progressing Protestantism of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, which was initiated by Schleiermacher, and which historically attached itself to the creative impulses of the Reformation rather than to the rigid confessionalism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

But the influence of Schleiermacher did not proceed in an unbroken line. It manifested itself in diverse and divergent tendencies. One of these is the so-called Meditational School, standing midway between conservatism and radicalism. Its greatest representatives in Germany were Neander, Rothe, Dörner, Martensen, Müller and Ullman. The term "mediational" sufficiently explains their purpose. Proceeding from the principles and premises of Schleiermacher, they sought to reconcile the new with the old, to mediate between the revealed and rational truth, between the old religion and the new philosophy. Thus they were differentiated on the one hand from the reactionary tendencies which sought in vain to combine the principle of Schleiermacher, that religion is life, with the traditional conception of Christianity as a static sum of doctrine and duty. And, on the other hand, they differed from the radical movement which, starting from Schleiermacher's premise that religion is life, ultimately arrived at the conclusion that this life is purely subjective and has no objective basis in history nor an ultimate ground in eternity. Standing

thus, between the two extremes of reactionary confessionism and vague subjective idealism, the mediational theologians again developed their theological systems in two divergent directions. The one class combined Schleiermacher's theology with Hegelian philosophy. They relied on logic and metaphysics to explain the ultimate mysteries of life; while the other class grew more and more to distrust metaphysics and learned to lean on history and psychology. The latter school leads to Ritschl and his followers, while the former school is represented by Rothe and Dörner, and, in more recent days, by the "positiv-Christliche" tendency, whose chief English representative is, perhaps, Principal P. T. Forsyth.

The Mercersburg theology grew out of that phase of the mediational theology in Germany which represented an eclectic combination of the principles and impulses of Schleiermacher and Hegel. From the former they derived the fundamental conception of religion as a life, antedating and conditioning theology and morality, and from the latter the idea of history as a developmental process. Schleiermacher taught them that Christ is the principle of theology, and from Hegel they learned that the world of experience is a progressive embodiment of divine reason. Besides these two factors there entered into the Mercersburg theology a third element which was confessional, or denominational, namely the traditional faith of the Reformed Church as expressed in the Heidelberg Catechism. This element may be clearly traced in the staunch Biblicism of the Mercersburg theologians, in the central position which the Apostles' Creed holds in their system, and in the acceptance of Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The Biblicism of Mercersburg was, indeed, very unlike that post-Reformation dogmatism which regarded the Bible as a repository of infallibly inspired proof-texts. Their conception of historical development enabled them to study the Bible with scientific open-mindedness. Nor was the creed merely a compendium of supernatural knowledge necessary for salvation. But the Bible was held to be the history of the redemptive

process which centered in Jesus Christ, and the creed the summary of facts relating to Christ. Both must be studied and understood in the light of the christocentric idea. But, thus understood, the Bible and the Apostles' Creed defined the boundaries of Christian faith. Within these boundaries reason could exercise its varied faculties to show the height and depth of God's redemptive love manifested in Christ, but beyond these sacred precincts of revelation human reason had no right to go. This biblical, confessional element was one of the constitutive factors of the Mercersburg theology. Finally, there must be mentioned a fourth factor which was derived neither from contemporary German life, as represented by Schleiermacher and Hegel, nor from the traditional faith of the Reformed Church, but which owed its important place in the Mercersburg theology to certain factors in the life of the American Protestantism of Puritan and Wesleyan descent, which were exerting their transforming influence upon the Reformed Church. In resisting this unchurchly, revivalistic tendency, the Mercersburg movement gave prominence, if not preëminence, to the doctrines of the church and of the sacraments. It is doubtless true that these doctrines are an essential part of the Mercersburg theology, yet in the bitter controversies to which their promulgation gave rise they were placed out of focus. They overshadowed and obscured the really central doctrine of Mercersburg, which is that of the incarnation. And they are responsible for the peculiarly perverse judgment that the last and least of the phases of the Mercersburg movement, the liturgical controversy, was the very essence of the Mercersburg theology.

Such, then, are the historic antecedents of the Mercersburg theology. It was a spiritual heir of Schleiermacher's regenerated Protestantism as represented by the mediational school of Neander and Dörner, modified by the confessional Biblicism of the Heidelberg Catechism and by certain practical tendencies in contemporary American life. The story how that broad, deep stream of Protestantism flowed from its source in

Germany to the remote and obscure village of Mercersburg may well be called one of the romances of our Reformed history. Some of us who drank of its waters would call it not merely a strange coincidence, but a gracious providence. The story forms part of our common knowledge and need not be rehearsed in detail at this time. F. A. Rauch and Philip Schaff were the living links between Germany and Mercersburg. The former, a student of the Hegelian Daub, may be said to have introduced the genetic philosophy into Mercersburg, while the latter, a student of Neander, domiciled Schleiermacher's conception of religion and Neander's theory of historic development, as applied to the history of Christianity, in the bosom of our Reformed Church. Before Rauch's death in 1841 Dr. Nevin had become his associate, and before Dr. Schaff arrived in Mercersburg, in 1844, Dr. Gerhart had become a student at Mercersburg. Like Rauch, so Schaff was severely criticized for his first utterances. When his presentation of the doctrine of historic development in his inaugural address on the "Principle of Protestantism" led to violent criticism, he said: "I put into it everything that my professors had told me and had no idea that my audience was not prepared to receive it." But no one in America at that time was prepared to receive the principles taught by Rauch and Schaff. Yet there was present at Mercersburg a small group of men whose mental stature and spiritual caliber provided a rich soil for the foreign seed. Among them was E. V. Gerhart, who in due time became the chief formulator of the Mercersburg theology.

2. *The Essence of Dr. Gerhart's Theology.*—What now is the essence of Dr. Gerhart's theology? To answer that question it is not necessary to review the contents of the two massive volumes that enshrine it. That would be an impossible task at this time. But these two volumes form an organic entity. They have a common principle of life that throbs in every part. If you grasp this principle you may, by logical inference, construe every doctrine. And if you start with a specific doctrine

you will come finally to the heart and center of Dr. Gerhart's system. This dominant principle was the christocentric idea. "From the Christ idea, as the fundamental principle, are to be developed all scriptural doctrines," thus Dr. Gerhart himself defines his purpose as a theologian.

This christological principle was by no means new, though the Mercersburg theologians were the very first to propound and vindicate it in America. It had been held, theoretically at least, by all Christian theologians before and after the Reformation. The Great Synod of Berne, *e. g.*, which assembled in 1532, affirmed "that Christ is the center of Christian teaching and that God himself can only be known as He has revealed himself in Christ." But in spite of such avowals, which were common and frequent, the christocentric idea had never been made the ruling principle of theological thinking until Schleiermacher restored it to its central place. In the Catholic Church, Christ was displaced by his vicar and by the institution over which he presided. In Protestant churches the central position was given to the doctrine of justification by faith or of the divine sovereignty. Following Schleiermacher, it was the avowed purpose of Dr. Gerhart to restore Jesus Christ to his rightful centrality in theological thinking.

But we must note another point of distinction between Dr. Gerhart and his theological predecessors in respect to this christological principle. He differed and departed from them, not only formally, in the thoroughness with which he applied and elaborated it, but also materially, in the way in which he conceived it. It was Jesus Christ Himself, the divine human personality, not a doctrine about Christ, or the teaching of Christ, nor even His work, but Christ Himself that constituted the christocentric idea.

This "theanthropic person" was the gift of God's infinite love. In Christ the divine had assumed generic humanity. In Christ the human had been united with the divine in organic union. This God-man, the incarnate Son of God, is the sum and substance of the whole Christian revelation. In Him

creation, revelation and redemption are complete; and, as the second Adam, Christ became the head of a regenerated human race. This is Dr. Gerhart's conception of the christocentric principle. It is not merely an idea concerning Christ, a doctrine or speculation, but it is the fact of the incarnation; an organic union of God with man; a real transaction of God in the world. This, he maintains, must be given regulative force in Christian thinking. Thus the christocentric principle of Dr. Gerhart is really the fact of the incarnation. This is absolutely cardinal and central in his theology, as, indeed, in the whole Mercersburg movement. In order to understand its full significance, let us compare and contrast it for a moment with other christocentric principles that were then and are still regnant in theology.

As was said above, the christocentric idea was the common heritage of all Christian thinkers. But the really central idea in the various systems of theology was not the person of Christ, but a doctrine of His person. It was held, *e. g.*, that Jesus was a divine teacher, and a christocentric theology, accordingly, was one which contained, without addition or subtraction, the truths which the Master had taught, which were deposited in the Bible and explained by the creeds. Or, again, the emphasis fell not on what Jesus taught but on what He did for our salvation. It was held that He was more than a teacher. He was the Lamb of God, sent to offer Himself as a voluntary sacrifice for the sin of the world. Hence, a christocentric theology was one which gave preëminence to the doctrine of the atonement. And in most of the theological systems of the past these two forms of the christocentric principle were found in combination. They set forth what Jesus had wrought and taught for our salvation. The saving doctrines of Jesus, and His atoning life and death, were made central and cardinal, and salvation, according to them, was secured by the humble acceptance of these revealed truths. Now to Dr. Gerhart the christocentric principle meant something wholly different and vastly more. He claimed that it was the person of Christ, the

incarnate God-man, that gave value to His doctrine and worth to His work. Not what He did or taught, but what He was, through the mystery of the incarnation, was the illuminative center of divine truth. The Christian religion was not merely a system of doctrines, instructing the minds; nor merely a set of precepts, controlling the will. The essence of it was not even Christ's vicarious death, propitiating God and redeeming man. It was an organic life fellowship, a vital communion between God and man, which God Himself had established in the person of Christ through the mystery of the incarnation. And salvation meant to share this life of Christ through mystic union with Him.

The Mercersburg theologians, including Dr. Gerhart, generally and firmly believed that the conception and application of the christocentric idea was the reassertion and the legitimate development of the traditional faith of the Reformed Church. I am persuaded that in this conviction they were partly right and partly wrong. They did, indeed, reassert the spirit of the Protestant Reformation. They were themselves imbued with a spirit akin to that of Luther, who sought salvation and found it in Christ; and to that of Zwingli, who sought truth and found it in the Scriptures. Like these original reformers, in their creative epochs, and unlike many of their followers in subsequent ages, these Mercersburg theologians magnified Jesus Christ as the source of salvation and as the principle of Christian knowledge, and the Bible as the chief witness to Christ. Loyalty to this supreme person of history meant vastly more to them than conformity to a system, whatever its name or authority. But their theology was not a re-pristination of Zwingli, Calvin or Melancthon. It cannot even be regarded as a reproduction under new conditions of any confessional system of the Reformation era. In making the fact of the incarnation cardinal and central in their theology they departed radically from every theological system in Christendom since the time of Augustine, and, let me add, they passed immeasurably beyond all of them. These leaders of the Mercersburg

movement also believed that in the christocentric theology they were reasserting a Catholic Christianity older than the Reformation, one, in fact, whose vital principles the reformers had sought to reëstablish. They found this older type of true christocentric theology in the Gospels, in the Ecumenic creeds, and in the writings of the ancient church fathers. I am profoundly convinced that in this conviction the Mercersburg theologians, in the main, were absolutely right. If we study the movement from our present vantage ground, in its true perspective of history, the conviction forces itself upon us that our Mercersburg fathers builded better than they knew.

The student of the history of Christian theology clearly discerns two tendencies running through the ages. The one may be called the theology of the incarnation. It makes the fact of the incarnation of God in Christ the controlling principle of its thinking. In that divinely given fact Christ restored the organic union between God and man which sin had sundered. In that divine fact God realized and consummated His eternal purpose, which sin had delayed and disturbed, but not frustrated. Jesus, therefore, the Incarnate One, was the completion of creation, revelation and redemption. This is the theology of the prologue of the Gospel of St. John, of Hebrews and Colossians, and of many passages in other epistles. It is organic, not mechanical; mystic, not rationalistic; ethical, not forensic. And in the early Christian church this theology of the incarnation found magnificent utterance in the writings of the Alexandrine fathers and in the christological and trinitarian creeds.

Historically interpreted, these great creeds are the attempt to explain and vindicate the saviorhood of Christ, the redemptive experience of Christians, by means of Greek metaphysics. They are a magnificent philosophic defense of the great central fact of Christian experience that in Jesus Christ God Himself had entered the human race in order to redeem it. If this truly christocentric theology had prevailed through subsequent ages the development of Christian doctrine would have

been far more vital and ethical and less legal and metaphysical. But another tendency came into prominence and arrested the development of the Greek theology of the incarnation in its very infancy. And, from the time of Augustine to the present, this type has held almost undisputed sway in Christian theology, whether Catholic or Protestant. It is christological only in name, for, instead of making the divine-human person of Christ central, its constructive principle is what Christ wrought and taught. And the incarnation, instead of being regarded as the sum and substance of Christianity, becomes merely the means to an end; the arbitrary and external device which God chose to redeem men. Such a theology is just the opposite of the Mercersburg theology. It is mechanical and forensic—yes, rationalistic—in spite of its claims of orthodoxy. It does not establish an organic connection between God and Christ and, therefore, it cannot establish an organic relation between Christ and the believer. Its Christ is merely functional; that is, He exercises certain external functions which were required for our salvation, such as proclaiming the will of God and offering a sacrifice for sin. And its doctrine of salvation is forensic, not dynamic; that is, man is saved not by a spiritual transformation through mystic union with Christ, but mechanically through the infusion of sacramental grace, or externally through the imputation of Christ's merits.

If there were time, one might go a step further and show how these two contrasting types of theology represent, respectively, God as a father and God as a sovereign. The religion whose cardinal conception is the fatherhood of God can never find adequate interpretation in a theology whose constructive principles are derived from monarchy rather than from the family. Fatherhood implies a genetic and dynamic relation between God and man; one whose ultimate ground is the very nature of God, and not merely His will. And it was such a vital, personal relationship the theology of the incarnation struggled to set forth in its doctrines of creation,

revelation and redemption. But we need not pursue that line of thought now. It is not necessary for an understanding of Dr. Gerhart's theology. In order to understand his theology, however, and to appreciate it, it is absolutely necessary to grasp the full significance of his christocentric principle, namely the fact of the incarnation. That is the essence of Dr. Gerhart's theology. And, I repeat, in building their system on this basis, the Mercersburg theologians builded better than they knew. They not only linked the Reformed Church of the United States with the regenerated and progressive Protestantism of Germany, and with the vital theology of the ancient church, nay, they took for their constructive principle the central fact of the Gospels, and the cardinal fact of all history, namely, Jesus Christ, the gift of God's love.

Two things must be added to what has been said in order to complete our conception of Dr. Gerhart's theology. Both are necessary inferences from his christocentric idea, but they form important complements of his theological system. I refer to the historical and to the churchly character of the Mercersburg theology in general, and of Dr. Gerhart's theology in particular.

First, it was historical and biblical. The cardinal fact of Christianity, as we saw, is the incarnation. But this incarnation was not a divine expedient, a remedy for the abnormal situation created by the fall of man. It was not a temporary device chosen by the will of God. It was grounded in God's nature as the eternal Father of man. Sin profoundly affected the nature of the incarnation, but it did not create the necessity for it. That lay in the heart of God, in His creative purpose to make man in His image, destined to live with Him in a fellowship of life. Hence, the incarnation was not the mechanical irruption of God into history in a miraculous act that had no historical antecedents and no historical consequents, but it was a process running through all ages of history, and finding its culmination in the God-man, Jesus Christ. The

physical universe anticipated it, ethnic religions dimly groped after it, the Old Testament foreshadowed it and Christ fulfilled it. Thus the whole of history was a genetic process by means of which God and man, the supernatural and the natural, came into an organic union. As man, the first Adam, was the crown of creation, so Christ, the second Adam, was the head of a new humanity, regenerated and transformed by mystic union with Him. Hence, only through Christ as the illuminative principle can the ultimate cause of creation and the ultimate meaning of history be understood. But viewed in the light of Jesus Christ, the whole of history, from the beginning to the end of time, is seen as the progressive and culminative process of revelation and redemption.

And in this profound sense, Dr. Gerhart's theology was historical. It viewed God's incarnation in Christ not as a single fact, apart from the world's history, but as a process running through it to its divine consummation in Jesus Christ. "It apprehended Christianity as a historical reality in the world, subject to the same laws of development and progress which characterized all earthly existence. The coming of Christ in the flesh was mediated by an historical process of evolution in the life of the world in general, but particularly in the life of the chosen people. Christ came not abruptly, but in 'the fullness of time.' And since His coming, Christianity has been an historical life in the world, evolving itself continuously. Theology, accordingly, is the science which interprets this process of the incarnation according to the christocentric principle. It is a progressive science, progressing with the evolving purpose of God." No age, according to Dr. Gerhart, has final statements of doctrine, or unchangeably fixed forms of organization. The church must modify doctrinal formulas according to her progress in the knowledge of Christian truth, and her organization is controlled and shaped by ever-changing social conditions.

Deeply imbued with the historical spirit, Dr. Gerhart's theol-

ogy was at the same time intensely scriptural. It moved from beginning to end within the boundaries of the Apostles' Creed. Being historical and progressive did not mean that it dealt with the metaphysical speculations of men, or that it regarded the doctrines of the Christian faith as purely subjective experiences. Dr. Gerhart held, in common with all the Mercersburg theologians, that the historical facts of Christianity, as a redemptive order of life, were set forth in the Apostolic Creed. Each of its articles stated succinctly an objective historical fact which the Christian theologian is bound to accept as the given datum of his science. This ancient symbol was regarded as the *regula fidei* of the primitive church, and as its permanent charter of faith. Within the range of this regulative scheme of doctrine there was ample room for the progressive apprehension of supernatural truth, but there could be no radical departure from the facts of the traditional faith. The body of Christian doctrine must remain rooted and grounded in the objective, historical mystery of the new creation in Jesus Christ, as this has been first apprehended, and forever fixed, in the Apostles' Creed.

Finally, Dr. Gerhart's theology was churchly and sacramental. This again is simply a further extension of the christocentric principle as applied to the doctrines of the Church and of salvation. The Church, according to the teaching of Mercersburg, was the perpetuation of the incarnation. It was the God-man continuously and permanently present in history. The head of this organism was the glorified Christ, and its body consisted of those who shared His life, through mystic union with Him. Christ glorified in heaven and regenerate men on earth together constitute one mystic body. This is the Christian Church, holy, catholic and apostolic, in whose communion men may obtain salvation and eternal life.

It is evident that this doctrine of the Church is the logical sequence of the Mercersburg doctrine of the incarnation. The incarnate Christ was Christianity complete, but there must be

an organ, or a medium, through which Christ imparts His saving life to the world. That organ is the Christian Church. Hence the Church was not a human society produced by the voluntary association of its members for worship and work, but a new organism whose generic principle is the divine-human life mediated to man by the Holy Ghost.

And it is likewise evident that Dr. Gerhart's doctrine of salvation is only the logical sequence of his conception of the Church. If the Church is a divine-human spiritual organism, perpetuating the mystery of the incarnation in the world, then it must needs be a saving institution. And as such Dr. Gerhart treated it in his theology. The sacraments are the media of redemptive life to the believing individual. Through baptism the child is made a member of the body of Christ and thus a partaker of the life of Christ. Through the Lord's Supper Christ Himself constantly feeds and nourishes the souls of believers unto everlasting life. Both sacraments were expressly instituted by Christ to serve as the media for imparting His saving life to believers. And salvation from sin and eternal life may be obtained only in the bosom of the Christian Church through mystic union with Christ. Salvation, accordingly, is not a private, individual transaction between the believer and Christ. Only the Church can bestow salvation upon man. Only through the sacraments man may obtain that divine life whose possession is salvation. Those sacraments are, indeed, not efficacious without the coöperation of the faith of the recipient. Yet it is not the faith of the recipient that invests them with their saving power, but their divine appointment.

This, then, is the theology of Dr. Gerhart. It is a theology of the incarnation, which finds in the person of Christ, the God-man, the constructive principle for its doctrines of God and man, and of their relation in sin and salvation, through time and eternity.

3. *The Results of Dr. Gerhart's Theology.*—In conclusion,

I ask what are the results of this theology? What are its transient features, and what is its permanent value? And here, let it be said, first of all, that Dr. Gerhart and the Mercersburg theologians, whose spokesman he was, have put the Reformed Church under large and lasting obligations for establishing a fruitful connection between our theology and the regenerated, progressive Protestantism of the Continent. I am certain that I voice the sentiment of every student of Dr. Gerhart in paying this tribute to the memory of a great teacher of divine truth. It was an immense service, to put into the heart of the Reformed Church the quickening faith that religion is life and that Christ is Christianity, at a time when her heart was faint and through decades when the heart of all Christendom was being sorely tested and tried. It was an immense service, likewise, to imbue us with a new faith in historic development. These great principles, which are of the very substance of Dr. Gerhart's teaching, have enabled many of us to accept the conclusions of evolutionary science and of modern biblical scholarship without detriment to our Christian faith. It was of great significance, furthermore, that these principles came to us from Germany, and through the Mercersburg theology, in their mediational form, balanced and buttressed by a Biblical faith and by a profound appreciation of the historical forms and features of Christianity. For be it remembered, the idealistic spirit of rejuvenated Germany found lodgment in New England through Everett, Bancroft and Ticknor about two decades before it came to Mercersburg through Rauch and Schaff. But there it led to a vague transcendentalism in philosophy, and to Emersonian Unitarianism in religion. These founders of New England transcendentalism returned from Germany imbued with the spirit of romanticism and of subjective rationalism, rather than with the spirit of Schleiermacher's regenerated Protestantism.

If from this appreciation of Dr. Gerhart's theology in

general we turn to a critical estimate of it, a distinction must be made, in my judgment, first of all, between the dominant principle of his system and its concrete details. The latter, the essential doctrines of Christian theology, Dr. Gerhart derived from the Bible as summed up in the Apostles' Creed, as we have seen. Thus, for example, you will observe, by examining the *Institutes*, that Dr. Gerhart finds the doctrine of the trinity even in the Old Testament, and regards it as a supernatural revelation of the distinctions that exist in the inner nature of the Godhead. Similarly, Christ's descent into hell, and the doctrine of angels, good and evil, are made substantial doctrines of Christian theology. And a detailed and a precise doctrinal statement is given to the last things, the second advent, and the dual destiny of mankind. Schleiermacher defined Christian doctrines as propositions which describe states of the Christian consciousness. He did not believe that the truths of theology are given to us ready-made, whether intuitively in reason or supernaturally by revelation, but that they are the joint product of reason and revelation. Their ground is found in the Christian experience of God, mediated through Jesus Christ, but their form is determined by the thought of the age that formulates them. Since the day of Dr. Gerhart, biblical and historical studies have immensely strengthened and confirmed Schleiermacher's conception of theology. These sciences were in their infancy when the Mercersburg theology was born. It was possible, then, to maintain that the Apostles' Creed was the *regula fidei* of the apostolic Church, and that the Church itself, as a sacramental institution, was a divine creation. But it is impossible to believe these things now, in the light of our modern knowledge of the rise and development of the Christian Church. Hence modern theology will be silent on some doctrines which Dr. Gerhart taught eloquently, and it will modify many of the doctrinal statements of his theological system, believing that Christian doctrines are the abiding religious convictions grow-

ing out of God's historic revelation in Christ, rather than affirming that they are the truths given, ready-made, in the Bible or in creeds.

When we examine, next, the christological idea which formed the core of Dr. Gerhart's theology, we must reaffirm what was said above. In making the incarnation the cardinal principle of Christianity rather than the doctrine of the atonement or the sovereignty of God, Dr. Gerhart returned to the central truth of Christian revelation. Here he was not merely the heir of the noblest theology of the past, but also the prophet of a still nobler theology of the future, when that profound truth shall be seen and stated in its full significance, as binding together creation, revelation, and redemption, and as making Jesus Christ, the revealer of God and of man, the central fact in history, in whom God and man meet in a communion of life. Here, modern theology is in profound accord with the theology of Dr. Gerhart in making this christological idea of the incarnation vital and constructive in its thinking.

And yet, here also, one must note important modifications. According to Dr. Gerhart, the incarnation meant the organic union in Christ of the divine nature and of the human nature. He did, indeed, mark an immense advance over all previous christologies, in that he conceived these two natures to be mutually compatible, as kindred and not as alien. Hence the incarnation was not the 'incomprehensible mystery of the union of two mutually exclusive and incompatible natures, but rather the coming of God into a human nature that was akin to His own, and pouring a divine fullness of life into a human vessel creatively adapted to receive it.

In this epoch-making departure from traditional christology, Dr. Gerhart was a disciple of I. A. Dorner, who points to a new solution of the problem of the person of Christ. This great German theologian opened our eyes to the fact that, in the past, Christian theologians, under the influence of Greek philosophy, had approached the problem from false premises.

Their major premise was that the nature of God and of man differ radically. Hence they were forced to the conclusion: *finitum non capax infiniti*. Obviously, a God conceived as Incomprehensible Substance, after the fashion of Greek philosophy, could not possibly reveal Himself through the medium of a human personality. He might, indeed, conceivably, assume a human nature, wholly foreign to His divine nature, in order to perform certain redemptive functions required by His plan of salvation, but such an incarnation would only be the miraculous combination of two discordant factors. It would not be an organic process, whereby the divine and the human had come into vital union, but rather a mechanical, and wholly exceptional, device, externally linking together God and man. Nor could such an incarnation be called a revelation or self-manifestation of God, in the strict sense. God "emptied Himself" of His eternal Godhead when He assumed the form of a man; He did not disclose His essential being and nature to us in Jesus Christ. The main purpose of the incarnation was to proclaim and to consummate, through Christ, God's plan of salvation.

It was Dörner who pointed out clearly the fallacy in this traditional mode of reasoning concerning the incarnation and the problem of the person of Christ. He taught us that the conception of God underlying all metaphysical christologies was not that of Christ, but, rather, that of Plato. The very essence of the Christian revelation is that God is a Christ-like being, not an inscrutable and incomprehensible Deity. His divine nature is ethical, not metaphysical. His character constitutes His essence. And, so conceived, God could reveal Himself through the medium of a human personality. There was no impassable gulf between the divine nature and the human that made the incarnation impossible, save as God emptied Himself. There is, instead, an eternal kinship between God and man, the relation of Father and child, for He made us in His image. The only barrier between God and man is sin, which obscures, but cannot destroy, the creative

kinship. And in the person of the sinless Jesus, our human nature, instead of veiling the divine, was the true, and only, vehicle for the perfect self-manifestation of God. There was no other way in which a God, who is truly our Father, could reveal Himself fully to mankind, save through the life of His perfect Son. And the very heart of the Gospel message is that the Christ-like God has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ. He showed us the Father.

Dr. Gerhart was in complete agreement with Dorner in this radical, and thoroughly evangelical reconstruction of the problem of the person of Christ. Here the historian of the development of theology in America must accord him the honor of being the first American theologian who made the transition from a purely metaphysical to an ethical conception of the incarnation. He taught, that "the axiom, *finitum non capax infiniti*, which for ages reigned in philosophy and christology, must abdicate; and that the consequent doctrine, that the infinite and the finite are mutually exclusive, is dissolved. Instead we are required to hold that the infinite nature of God and the finite nature of man are in sympathy. *Finitum capax infiniti*. Divine nature and human nature meet in the person of Jesus by virtue of an eternal aptitude of God for personal union with man, and an original aptitude of man for assumption into personal union with God." Thus Dr. Gerhart prepared the way for a conception of the incarnation as an organic union between God and man, whose consummation in the person of Jesus was the realization of God's eternal purpose, and, at the same time, the culmination of an age-long process.

Dr. Gerhart stands at the point of transition from the old christologies, which sought to explain the incarnation as the miraculous union of two opposite natures in one personality, to modern christology, which attempts to interpret the incarnation as the self-disclosure of the Christ-like God through the medium of the perfect humanity of Jesus Christ. But he did not succeed in basing his theory of the incarnation squarely on this new foundation. He helped to lay new foundations, strong

and true, and that great service will receive an increasing appreciation in future ages, when other workers, profiting by his labors, shall have erected an appropriate doctrinal superstructure. Like Dorner, he blazed the way where others might go farther in finding a solution of the problem of the person of Christ that will do full justice to the facts of history and to the convictions of faith.

But Dr. Gerhart still moves in the realm of abstract metaphysics, whither many loyal believers in Christ, the Savior of mankind, cannot follow him, when he regards the incarnation as being the union of an impersonal human nature with the divine person of the logos. Nor is the mystery of such a divine transaction measurably relieved by emphasizing the eternal and ineradicable affinity existing between the divine and the human. Modern theologians take their departure from history, *i. e.*, from the facts of revelation recorded in the New Testament. They realize keenly that, too often in the past, our theological speculations about the person of Jesus have ignored the very facts which they professed to explain. Therefore, instead of beginning their doctrine of the person of Christ with a theory of the preëxistent logos, they start with Jesus of Nazareth, with His matchless character and His unique consciousness, as portrayed in the Gospel narrative, confident that, thus, they will come to share the experience and the convictions of the earliest disciples, who found in this Jesus, "the Christ, the Son of the living God." They regard the term "logos" as being one of the most significant names that may be ascribed to Jesus, provided it be understood that the term is an historical label which men applied to Jesus in order to interpret adequately His redemptive power. Dr. Gerhart, however, uses the term "logos" as denoting a metaphysical divine entity, whose assumption of human nature constituted the incarnation.

Unquestionably, modern theology, in making its point of departure the full-orbed humanity of Jesus, His perfect humanity and not an impersonal human nature, rather than His

metaphysical deity—is in constant danger of lessening, or even losing, its emphasis on the full and true divinity of Christ. And if that were lost, the Christian religion would no longer be redemptive. It would become a splendid idealism, a great humanitarian enterprise, but it would lose its spiritual power of regenerating men and of transforming mankind. But the remedy for this defect is not a return to the speculative christologies of the past, whose defects were no less grave. The true remedy is a still more reverent study of the Jesus of history, and, especially, a deepening personal surrender to Him. The more men study the life of Jesus and the more deeply they come to experience His redemptive power, the more they will be constrained to raise questions about Him which faith alone can answer.

That is the new path which Dr. Gerhart has opened up for us, even though he himself did not see clearly whither it led, and on that path modern theologians are pressing forward towards the goal. They envy the faith of their fathers in logic and metaphysics as a means of solving the ultimate mystery of Christian faith. But they do not share it. They realize that life is deeper than their logic, and they confess that at many points life surpasses knowledge. The greatest of these points is where God, through Jesus Christ, enters into a new life-fellowship with man. They accept this culmination of the incarnation of God as a fact of history, and as the very foundation fact of Christian experience. They believe that in Jesus Christ God manifests Himself for our redemption. But they cannot follow Dr. Gerhart in regarding this supreme fact of the incarnation as being brought about by the union of two natures in one person. They seek to find the solution of the mystery of the incarnation in the personality of Jesus, in His character and in His consciousness, in His works and words. Their methods are psychological rather than metaphysical. But, pending the outcome of these modern christological studies, Christian theologians assert with Dr. Gerhart that in Jesus "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth."

The foundations of the Mercersburg theology were being laid one hundred years ago, in 1817, the birth-year of Dr. Gerhart. Then the world was observing the tercentenary of the Reformation, after the travail and chaos of the Napoleonic wars. Mankind looked anew for God in history, without whom, they felt, there could be no righteousness, no peace nor joy. And there were those who found Him in Jesus Christ, and who proclaimed the eternal salvation that God has provided in Him with new accents of assurance to hungry hearts. To-day, as we meet to observe the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Dr. Gerhart, history is repeating itself. We are observing the Quadri-Centenary of the Reformation amidst circumstances of even greater chaos and deeper gloom. But the war will cease, and when life flows in more tranquil channels, mankind will again seek God in this world. They will crave access to God as never before, and they will yearn for redemption from sin and for life abundant and eternal. May the theologians of to-day and to-morrow meet that supreme quest and need of men with the fidelity and zeal of Dr. Gerhart. May they present the Christian religion as the redemptive religion which God has established in Jesus Christ, and may they present Jesus Christ to men as their redeemer, through whom they have access to God, whom to know is eternal life. And, thus, they shall be the spiritual heirs of Dr. Gerhart, who took up the burden which he laid down after carrying it for many laborious years. With him, they shall be members of that glorious company of Christian men who, through all the ages, have sought to set forth the infinite riches of the wisdom and power of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

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IV.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE SUPERNATURAL.

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Christianity is preëminently the religion of the supernatural. As such it stands in contradistinction, first of all, to those religions that prevail among primitive and undeveloped races, which we call naturalistic. It is doubtful, however, whether this designation is accurate; for the term naturalistic can be applied only where there is a clear discrimination between natural and supernatural; and that is not the case with primitive races. So instead of calling their religion naturalistic, we might also call their conception of nature supernaturalistic. Christianity stands in contrast to these, therefore, in the clearness with which it distinguishes the two terms, and assigns to each its proper place; and in its emphasis on the supernatural it stands in contrast rather to those modern efforts which would eliminate the supernatural entirely, and give us a religion of nature, or, at best, a religion of humanity. But man craves for something higher than the world of nature, for something higher also than his own weak self, and he tries to come into contact with this, the supernatural and superhuman, in order that his life may be redeemed from its vanity and may obtain a worthy content. And just to the extent that religion can satisfy this craving will it be able to maintain itself among the varied interests of human life.

To this end it is necessary that we set the supernatural into the clearest possible light, and above all separate from it all those elements which have no rightful place there, and might prove a stumbling block to the faith of the modern man. The common use of the term makes it practically identical with the miraculous. But whatever our own personal views may be, it

is hard to find a place for miracles in the view of the world held by an ever-increasing number of people in our day. In the past it was not so. The world of nature seemed to be full of the extraordinary. The simple mind of more primitive ages looked out upon the world in constant wonder. They had not gone very far in tracing out the operation of natural forces, and so they saw in all these wonderful events the signs of special designs and of special agency on the part of the Deity. And when they looked into the past, the element of miracle loomed still larger. The Israelite, for example, looked back to the early beginnings of his national history, and he saw miracle upon miracle. Psalmist and Prophet found in these their favorite themes. They never wearied of recounting those wonderful events when God with an outstretched arm led his people out of Egypt, through the sea and wilderness, and finally established them in the land of promise. Similarly Christians look back to the age of the Apostles, when the sick were healed, the blind received their sight, and even the dead brought to life again by a mere word.

But it is right here that modern thought makes its greatest assaults. Natural science has cleared up mystery after mystery. It has explained by means of natural causes, operating according to natural law, what former ages referred to special divine agency. The historian has followed suit. He has not recognized any history as too sacred for him to enter with his modern methods of investigation. Everywhere he seeks for natural connections. And he has made miracles to vanish like mists before the rising sun. This is true in both profane and sacred history. The story is familiar and need not be recounted. So successful has the modern method been, so much of the mysterious has been drawn into the realm of clear knowledge, that science, both natural and historical, has become exceedingly bold, and has laid down the general hypothesis: There is no special divine agency, there is no miracle; all is due to natural forces, working according to natural law. And while there are still plenty of things that baffle, science adheres

to its hypothesis, and in no case resorts to the Deity as an explanation.

It is not the purpose of this paper either to sanction or to disprove this view. We have our own reasons for protesting not against miracles as such, but against the identification of the miraculous and the supernatural. The supernatural as it appeals to us is not a mere incident in religion but its heart and essence. It does not, therefore, consist of a number of isolated acts, but is a permanent order, into which our life is lifted and by which it is enfolded; it is not meant to be a mere sign of something else, and esteemed for its evidential value, but itself is the great reality and central fact to which everything else is subordinate. The very name that it bears defines its true nature. It is the *super-natural*, and we insist that the "super" be taken in a qualitative sense. On the other hand, what is a miracle? It is an event in the realm of nature. What distinguishes it from the ordinary is not its inherent nature, but the agency which produces it, or rather, the mode in which this agency works. Its cause is above nature; but in regard to its own inherent quality and sphere of occurrence it is a natural event. If the blind are made to see that is an event in nature, whether it is produced by the physician's scalpel or by the touch of the man of God. If the dead are restored to life that is a natural event whether it is done by the method of artificial respiration or by the word of the Lord of Life. In a remarkable passage in the Gospel of John, Jesus recognizes and states this view. The Jews ask for a sign and appeal to the story of the manna, calling it the Bread from Heaven. But Jesus contradicts them when he says: Moses did not give you Bread from Heaven. Your fathers ate manna and—died. In its nature and operation the manna did not differ from other food, and therefore Jesus refuses to call it the Bread from Heaven.

So much for the identification of the supernatural with the miraculous. We must now turn to another view which is frequently presented in our day as the alternative to the view just

combated. It is the doctrine of the general immanence of the divine in the world. We have made a great deal of this doctrine in our times; in fact, we have hailed it as a modern discovery. In this we have perhaps gone a little beyond the truth; for the immanence of God has always been recognized in orthodox theology. The charge that orthodox theology is deistic and believes in an absentee God is certainly untrue. What is modern about it is only the emphasis we have given it. We have seized upon it as the most effective weapon to defend our religion against the naturalistic conclusions of modern science. Religion found herself driven out of one stronghold after the other. Events that had been taken as sure evidences of divine agency were one after the other explained in terms of natural force and natural law; until at last the religious apologist, instead of defending merely the extraordinary, with one act reclaimed the whole world as divine. The scientist had proclaimed the sway of natural forces and natural law. "Well and good," answered the religious man; "but what if natural force is a divine working, and natural law is God's method. We admit that God does not constrain the world from without, but what if he governs it from within?" And so, thanks to the doctrine of divine immanence, the religious man of to-day may accept the general conclusions of natural science, and still believe in God.

And then a deeper reflection shows us that the doctrine of the divine immanence is necessary not only as the basis for religious faith but as the basis also for anything like an adequate view of reality. The naturalistic view which looks upon the world as a series of events succeeding each other in time or juxtaposed in space will answer very well for purposes of scientific investigation, but as soon as we raise deeper and fundamental questions, it breaks down completely. The spatial aspect of juxtaposition and mutual exclusion gives way to the more spiritual aspect of inclusion. Every object reveals relations to other objects. It is related formally by way of similarity and contrast; it is related spatially by way of proximity

and remoteness; it is related causally by way of action and reaction. And if we begin to trace out these relations there is no end to them. Each object is related to every other object in the whole world, and in a very real sense every object is a bundle of such relations, that is, every object is the universe. It is not finite but infinite. In a similar way we reason that succession in time is not the ultimate aspect of phenomena. Certainly to the mind that perceives them and affirms their succession they are present simultaneously. And apart from their relation to the perceiving mind, any deeper view of events, especially any view that regards them teleologically (and any deeper view must so regard them)—any deeper view, we say, must transcend the time relation of mere succession. For here it becomes true that the first is last and the last first; for the last, as the great goal of the series, is ideally present in the very beginning and the dominating element in the whole series. Thus we have present in the world an infinite and eternal element. Nature, which at first sight seems a mere series of successive and mutually exclusive events, begins on deeper reflection to transcend itself and to reveal the supernatural.

We must accept the doctrine of God's immanence in the world lest the supernatural appear as something detached from the world, as an afterthought, as something superadded from without. The supernatural, as we conceive it, is part and parcel of this world; it is all-pervasive; it is present in the whole world and in every part of it. And yet we affirm that this general immanence is not sufficient for the needs of our life. In making this affirmation we take issue with a strong current of religious thought that is widespread to-day within and without the Christian Church. There is current to-day a vague pantheism which thinks it has come to the climax of all wisdom in phrases like these: All is Mind; all is Spirit; all is God. According to this philosophy every man is his own savior. We hear about Christ, it is true; but the Christ of this system is not the historical Jesus, but a principle of personality. And

Monism

for redemption man must look not to the Jesus who lived and died and rose again, but to the little Christ, the little God within his own breast.

Within the Church we are a little more careful about our statements; yet here, too, there is a pantheistic trend. We are bidden to seek comfort in the fact that we are all divine and that God is present in the whole world. When we are perplexed about the trend of events, we are told that "God's in His heaven, All's right with the world." And when our souls reach out after God, we are told to rest in the sense of His nearness to all of us: "Nearer is He than breathing, and closer than hands and feet." Such statements, of course, are beautiful and full of truth; they become false, however, when they are taken to be the embodiment of the whole gospel.

I think we must say that as we pass from the old orthodoxy to this new gospel, we are struck with a distinct sense of loss. The old doctrine was so much more definite. There were areas distinctly marked off as sacred; there was ground that was holy; there were mountains smoking and trembling because of the divine presence; there were events laden with eternal significance; there were personalities who incarnated the divine nature. The divine was concentrated into small compass, where man could come into direct and definite contact with it. But now the divine is drawn out and scattered throughout the whole world. To find it we must trace it out through all its devious course. To hear its message we must listen to the voice of the grass and birds, of the winds and the stars, and to the still small voice within our own heart. That is poetical, no doubt; but how shall we make out any intelligible meaning in all these multitudinous voices and myriad revelations? There is too much discord and contradiction and confusion. There is good and there is evil; there is wisdom and there is folly; there is the permanent and there is the fleeting. Shall we put it all on one level and say: "All is Truth, all is Mind, all is God?" How about the evil? Is that merely an illusion of mortal mind? Surely we can not trifle with evil like that;

it is too deep and tragical to be simply set aside by a wave of the hand. Or if we want to distinguish, what shall be our standard of judgment?

The supernatural is present in the world, to be sure; but in the world it is drawn out too thin, and is contradicted by so much that is natural. The soul may find itself in touch with the Spirit out in the world, but it finds so much besides, that it must give its full assent to the old lines: "All this wide world to either pole, hath not for thee a home." We cannot rest in the general immanence of God in the world.

Or let us turn to our own inward life. We bear a supernatural element within ourselves. It is indeed true that the effort has been made time and again to explain human life in naturalistic terms. Consciousness, we are told, according to the atomistic theory, is made up of sensations which somehow succeed in combining themselves into percepts, concepts, and the higher forms of thought. Willing is simply a developed form of impulse, and choice is the prevalence of the strongest impulse over the others which for a while disputed the field with it. We need not take time to refute this kind of psychology. We believe, on the other hand, that there is present in both our knowledge and moral life an ideal element, which, in contrast to the sense element, we may call supersensuous and supernatural. Knowledge and morality consists in bringing all the sense element into subjection to this ideal. But do we ever succeed in this? No. Else, what meaning are we to attach to the constant recurrence of skepticism in knowledge, and to the universal sense of sin and guilt in the moral life? These are a standing testimony to the fact that our ideal is not satisfied. This is true especially in the realm of the moral life. "The good that I would, I do not, and the evil that I would not, that I do"—such is the common experience of all of us.

Now I do not believe that we will gain any permanent satisfaction by setting over against this sense of sin and guilt the philosophical reflection that, in spite of our sin, the ideal is

there nevertheless; that underneath all our human smallness and imperfection there lies the divine image without mar or blemish, and that some day it will gain the victory; that in the depth of our being we are all divine, and that in the end the divine in us will win the day. What guarantee have we for such a hope? Or will we be able at all to entertain that kind of a hope on the basis of mere philosophical reflection as to our "essential nature"? We do not believe that we can; and, therefore, we say without hesitation that the doctrine of general immanence does not give us a satisfactory account of the supernatural.

It is conceivable that a man may live in pharisaical self-righteousness, where the discrepancy between him and the ideal gives him no concern. A man may also live by philosophical reflection. But in either case the supernatural is not yet present as an original and immediate experience. Wherever it does so awaken it pronounces death rather than life, condemnation rather than salvation; and the cry of such a soul is like that of Paul: "Who shall deliver me?" Now let us suppose that this question is not only raised but also answered. Henceforth there will always be present the *sense* of deliverance. There will be a new consciousness, a consciousness of exaltation, of triumph, of freedom, of reconciliation and peace and joy. Condemnation has passed away and given way to the assurance of divine sonship. These are all elements in the supernatural as it exists in the experience of the Christian believer. It is the supernatural triumphant, in undisputed possession of the soul, and therefore a savor of life unto life. The natural is still present, but it has been subdued and can no longer bring condemnation.

The supernatural in Christian experience will always be colored by the memory of that struggle by which it has won its place; for whether it comes by sudden transition or by a more gradual process, it is always revolutionary in its inmost nature, making its way against opposition. And therefore it never allows itself to be considered a natural growth, the offspring

and outcome of a natural process. and takes to the natural that attitude of superiority that its name indicates. It is the child of heaven; it has its origin in a new birth; it speaks much of grace and not at all of merit. It is saturated through and through with the sense of forgiveness and redemption.

And so we take up into the idea of the supernatural the idea of redemption which is characteristic of Christianity. It has been necessary at different times to vindicate this redemptive nature of our religion. This we believe to be our task to-day against some of the tendencies of religious thought that meet us on every hand. There is a shallow idealism that takes the ideal and its supremacy for granted. Over against a too easy mixture of the divine with the natural process we must set a supernaturalism that is conscious of its heavenly origin; that is strong enough to arouse opposition; that is courageous enough to face the opposition, bent on world-conquest; that shall be virile enough to gain something of victory and triumph.

Such, briefly stated, is our conception of the supernatural. We have defined it, first of all, as an individual experience, because that seemed the most natural way of approach. The individual experience, however, has its support in a larger, objective order of life. This has already been implied when we called it heavenborn. It is to this larger aspect, as an objective order, that we must now turn.

This objective order confronts us as an historic movement. It comes to expression in personalities, in historic forces, in institutions. We have gotten beyond the rationalism of the eighteenth century men who believed that religion was a construction of the pure reason. We know that it is the product of that larger Reason, working and revealing itself in human aspirations, struggles and experiences; that it is, in other words, the product of historic forces and movements.

Now we believe it is easy to discern in the complex mass of human life a distinct movement, like the gulf stream in the ocean, not separate yet distinct, and carrying its own dynamic power within itself. It is the current of historic Christianity.

It is true that Christianity stands in intimate connections with the rest of human life. It is like a leaven, or like the salt. 'And it not only acts but is reacted upon by the world. Furthermore, this influence exerted by the world goes beyond externals and affects even its very ideals. History shows this. Just as soon as Christianity separates itself in monkish isolation it becomes unhealthy and begins to decay. We might point out specific instances of how the Christian ideal has been modified and clarified by the general life-movement of the world. Let the mere mention of the slavery question and the modern social question suffice. Yet in one respect Christian idealism is distinct, and that is in its redemptive quality. This is a distinction that is enormous in its significance, and justifies us fully in maintaining, as we do, that historic Christianity is the bearer of the supernatural.

Christianity, like every historical movement, has a beginning. Though striking its roots back into the past, it began with Jesus of Nazareth. This is not theory but fact. Some modern scholars have tried to discredit this, and to belittle, if not to deny altogether, the part of Jesus in Christian history. But we can dismiss these efforts without further consideration. The great mass of Christian believers, including the best Christian scholars, continue to ascribe the founding of Christianity to Jesus of Nazareth.

We believe that the gospel records are entirely trustworthy on this point. They tell us that Jesus began his public ministry by gathering about him a little company of disciples, whom he admitted into the most intimate fellowship of heart and mind and life with himself. As a result there grew up in the minds of the disciples the conviction that this Jesus was the expected Messiah and Deliverer of Israel; to which conviction Peter gave expression when he said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then came the tragic days which ended with Calvary, which left the disciples with a keen sense of disappointment. Then came the period of visions, of mingled faith and doubt. What the attitude of the disciples

was in those days is well brought out in the record of the ascension, which shows us the disciples standing and gazing into heaven. Was that to be the final outcome of all this marvellous history? No, that could not be. And so in the more sober moments that followed, when they began to estimate the meaning of it all, and to take invoice of their own spiritual gains, they found that the Kingdom of God had indeed come to them; for they had a new certainty of forgiveness, a new sense of divine sonship, and a new grasp of spiritual things. They had received the regeneration of life through the Spirit of the victorious Christ.

And forthwith they began to preach the new faith. Others were added to them, to whom was imparted the same faith and hope; and so it has come down the ages even unto us in unbroken continuity, faith begetting faith, heart touching heart, life kindling life. So in the great ocean of human life with its waves and tides and currents we can distinguish the great stream of Christian history, the bearer to us of an experience that is heavenly and heavenborn.

We are concerned here with a twofold fact: First, the community of believers; and then, the person of Jesus. We cannot deny that in the case of both Jesus and the Church we encounter difficulties in our times. In the case of Jesus we have difficulties on the historical side. The critical study of the gospels has raised many doubts and questions which it can not answer. We are struck to-day with the very meager nature of our certain knowledge about Jesus. And when we come to the subject of Christology we are in a worse plight still. There is a great deal of confusion and perplexity; doubts have struck deep; we are trying to hold fast to old formulæ and by frequent repetition are trying to make ourselves believe that we believe. We think, perhaps, that we can retain the old statements and only need to change the interpretation a little. But this is too optimistic a view. The old Christology with its two-nature theory no longer possesses any intelligible meaning for us. No doubt, by a great deal of effort in the way of historical

research, we may learn to appreciate the motives that lie back of the doctrine; but this is for scholars, not for the common man. And furthermore, a faith which we must hold fast by such a desperate effort is too weak to overcome the world.

There are those among us who think that we need no Christology, that the historical Jesus will make such a direct and immediate appeal to the heart that he will hold his place in human life without any Christological doctrine. We are in full accord with this emphasis on the historical and human life of Jesus. However, let us not deceive ourselves. For the confidence that lies back of these statements is itself a rather big creed. They imply not merely a statement of fact with reference to the past and present influence of Jesus, but also a prophecy of what will be and must be. Let us try to state the case a little more explicitly; and the best way to do so is to go a little into its history.

The gospel of John tells us that when Andrew first met Jesus and had spent that memorable day with him, he afterwards came to his brother Simon and said: "We have found the Messiah." He did not try to reproduce in detail all that Jesus had said and done, but sums it all up in a single term: Messiah. If any one is disposed to be critical and to remind us that we ought rather to take the synoptic account of the meeting of Jesus with the disciples and the way in which the latter were led to faith in him, it does not matter. It comes eventually to the same thing. The disciples were first impressed and then they began to interpret him; and they did so in terms of a category that lay ready to hand. When afterwards they presented the Master to others they do so by proclaiming his Messiahship. Then if any one doubted, they could say: Come and see; verify it for yourself.

We do not believe that Jesus and the Messianic category, as understood by the Jews, fit precisely. Furthermore the Messianic idea would not be of much service to interpret Jesus to us Gentiles. We have, therefore, tried to interpret him in terms of a metaphysical analysis of his person, as set forth in

the two-nature theory of the creeds. As has already been stated this is no longer satisfactory to us. What shall we do? Shall we cast all doctrine to the winds? Let us see what would happen in that case. Professor Herrmann in his book, *The Communion with God*, speaks somewhere of his own inability to present Jesus in such a way that his image must become alive and active in the heart of the reader, and he adds: "If I were able to preach like F. W. Robertson or H. Hoffman, etc." That, then, seems to be the alternative to Christological doctrine. It is oratory, the dramatic presentation of Jesus. God forbid that we should despise oratory in the service of Christ. But Paul too says something about oratory, and of the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. We are in thorough accord with the general tendency of Professor Herrmann's book. His main contention about the necessity of a vital experience of Jesus is true. At the same time this is for the most of us the achievement of a lifetime; it comes slowly and gradually. In the meantime, what is to bring us into the fellowship of Jesus and hold us there but the conviction, alive in the church and presented to us with the "demonstration of the Spirit and of power," that Jesus is able to accomplish what we expect of him. In other words, we need a Christology, one that is brief and simple and will commend itself to our own age. We may draw an analogy from the realm of art. A great painting makes its appeal not only by what it expresses but also and chiefly by what it suggests. The interpretation of such a painting, therefore, requires practice and skill of a high order; and, to help the unexperienced, the painter adds a title. So even the most skillful narrator or preacher must despair of expressing everything that is contained in Jesus—doesn't the Apostle say that in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily?—and so he draws his portrait, trusting in what it will suggest; and for fear that the immature in faith will not see or feel all that is there, he sends his portrait out with the title: Jesus, the Son of God.

I know no more satisfactory Christological statement than this, that Jesus is the Son of God. This is the formula that has come down through the Christian centuries. It is hallowed with age. It is elastic enough to be universally acceptable. Yet it is definite enough to serve as a challenge to the world to take Jesus as the Leader and Lord. It means that Jesus is the bearer of the supernatural; that in him we have the triumph of the ideal; that in him we come upon that which is ultimate in the way of life's ideal; that redemption, forgiveness, divine sonship, the peace and righteousness of the Kingdom of God are inseparably bound up with his name. These are all empirical facts. And when we say that Jesus is the Son of God we do not mean to express the metaphysical composition of his person, but the way in which he functions in our human life. We mean to say that he holds a unique place, and a permanent place in human life with reference to those things that are fundamental. We say this with all confidence. We have weighed the question: Granting as we must that Jesus has held this unique place in the past, will it continue to be so in the future? Is it not conceivable or probable that in the future we will be able to dispense with him? If that were the case, one of two things would be possible: We might in the first place fall back upon the general immanence of the divine, which, in view of what we have already said, can be dismissed as unsatisfactory; or, in the second place, we might still cling to that special and historic order of life, through which the individual is reborn and supported in his personal experience, but an order now that is no longer essentially rooted in the life and work of Jesus. Our conviction is that a large world-wide movement, as Christianity is and must needs be, must have a firm support in definite historical fact; and that the person and personal history of Jesus is adequate for this purpose. To justify such a sweeping statement would require more space than we can devote to it here. A few suggestions must suffice.

In order to appreciate properly the position of Jesus, we must take into consideration not only the person of Jesus him-

self and his matchless life and death, but also the historical setting in which his life was placed. Scripture gives us a number of hints on this subject, but they have never figured, to my knowledge, in Christological doctrine. Jesus was born in the fulness of time, and that had something to do with the success of his work. What we mean is that the stamp of finality which the work of Jesus received was very intimately connected with the peculiar condition of the world in its life and thought at that time. As a second element, let us remember that there are certain things that can be done only once. Jesus has suffered once, the righteous for the unrighteous, and has once and for all redeemed the world, or if that is too theological, he has once and for all given us the consciousness of redemption, and it is inconceivable to me how this can ever become separated from him. But the element in the situation that appeals most to me is the wonderful way in which the immanent and transcendent meet in him. We have in Jesus the element of finality. This applies especially to the redemptive feature of his work. The consciousness of redemption as brought to us by Jesus is complete and final, and it is absolutely inconceivable how there can be any essential modification in this. At the same time Jesus presents to us in his life and teaching an ideal that is so rich in its suggestiveness. Jesus himself says: "The Father is greater than I;" at the same time he says: "I and the Father are one." Or again he says: "He who seeth me seeth the Father." We always feel when we are with Jesus, that there is more in the background. So with all the aspects of finality that he bears in certain respects, he is so wonderfully adapted to become an expanding ideal. There have been great men in history who have affected most profoundly their own age, but whom succeeding generations have outgrown. We cannot outgrow Jesus, because he grows with us. He has entered the consciousness of the Church as the nucleus around which the loftiest thoughts have gathered. He has entered our life as a living and growing ideal.

With this idea we pass over to the Church. The characteristic thing about the Church as a supernatural agency is this continuity of life, this presence within her of the informing ideal, the living Christ. This introduces the element of mysticism, to which some supersensitive minds of our time object. But let us not make the mistake of eliminating all that is mystical from religion; we might as well have poetry without sentiment as religion without mysticism. Surely the Church is more than a mere collection of individuals; that would be bad psychology as well as bad theology. She possesses an indwelling Spirit, and to assimilate men and women unto this indwelling Spirit is her supreme task. This we may call the sacramental function, to which every other function, whether of preaching, or teaching, or worship, is subordinate. To the exercise of this function the whole life of the Church and all her activity ministers. The Sacraments themselves in the narrower sense are but symbolical of that power which lies in the Church as a whole. This broadening of the sacramental idea ought to commend itself to our modern times. The Roman Church had taught that the efficacy of the Sacraments lies in the elements, which are changed into the body and blood of Christ; the Reformed Church broadened this idea and taught that the efficacy lies in the sacramental transaction. We believe it will appeal still more to us to make the efficacy lie in the Church as a whole.

In what precedes we have identified the supernatural with the Christian movement that issues from Jesus and has organized itself in the Church. We do not mean to say, however, that the two exactly cover each other. On the contrary, there is much in the Church that misrepresents the ideal, and there is much in the ideal that does not, as yet, find expression in the life of the Church. We can express this in technical language by saying that the supernatural has the aspect of transcendence. True religion has always insisted on the transcendence of the divine. Slowly and by a painful process man has been

taught this truth. Ever and anon man has seized upon some object that seemed to embody God, only to find some prophet of the true and living God, who came and cried: "Idolatry!" We have given all our sympathy to the prophets in their struggle against idolatry and the persecution they have inevitably evoked upon themselves. But would it not be well to put ourselves in the idolater's place and to try, by sympathetic entrance into his feelings, to understand his plight? Why have people always persecuted the man who told them their images and stars and trees were idols? Why, because these sacred objects had been a real help to them, and therefore had become dear to them. And yet the prophet is right. God is in the tree with its beauty and strength, but if you worship the tree you become an idolater, because you think God can be contained within one perishable object, and fail to see him in the whole, big sweep of the universe. Sooner or later, man would find out by his own sad experience that his God has been only an idol. For somehow the divine is so elusive; and just as soon as you begin to clutch it, it proves to be an empty husk, and leaves you disappointed and without comfort. You may stand before your sacred mountain, but you must not touch it; yea, you may have your Jesus, but you must not touch him.

This is the idolater's lesson and it is our lesson, too. Or have we already learned it? We have progressed towards it, without a doubt. The fact that we think in dynamic rather than static terms is an indication of this. We do not think of the divine as a substance or dead deposit, but as a living energy. And this is the nature of energy: It is so elusive; you can not hold it fast; you can not build an enclosure around it and say: "Now I have got it." The Kingdom of God does not come with observation, so that you can say: "Lo, here; lo, there." It is a task to be worked at and an ideal to guide you in your efforts; and if you are faithful you shall enter upon its joy.

At the same time, we shall find that our best efforts are imperfect. There is always a discrepancy between the ideal and our best achievements. That is true with reference to our personal lives, and also with reference to our social task, of which we make so much to-day. And so we must always fall back upon that Kingdom of God that is within. We must learn to look away from the visible and walk by that faith whose proper sphere is the invisible. Our Utopias may be an illusion, but our idealism is not an illusion. It brings us some measure even of tangible gain; for while we have not made earth a heaven, we have kept it from becoming a hell; while we can not point to a perfect reconstruction of society, we have succeeded in keeping alive the ideal. And not the least gain will be the salvation of our own soul, as Jesus said to his disciples: "In this rejoice not that the devils are subject unto you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." Can we not sum up the situation by saying that our Christianity has the two poles, rest and activity, and is a movement back and forth between the two, yet so that in the rest there is no cessation of activity, and in the activity there is still a perfect rest? And the whole movement is within the Christ, who is the ideal in its twofold aspect of immanence and transcendence.

We are living in an age when we are dealing, and must deal, with the "problem" of Christianity. In this paper we have tried to deal with this problem in the most general way. We have dealt with the question of the finality of our religion; with its absolute character, if you please. We believe that Christianity is not merely one religion out of many, but is *the* religion, now and for all time. There was a time when this conviction was easy and natural; now, on the other hand, we must work our way back to it through doubts that are thick and many. We can no longer point to those miraculous events that attended its birth and first years of existence, and marked it out as extraordinary. And when we come to the miracle of

miracles, which was supposed to reach down into the inmost life of the Founder and to lift him out of the realm of ordinary human life and to give him a unique place in the world. we can't hold it, if at all, with the same assurance. Christianity is unique because it presents to us an ideal that is unique, an ideal that saves. We have called it the religion of the supernatural; and it is that because it brings God to us in final form. Not that it answers all intellectual questions about God, nor that it brings a perfect morality; but that it brings God to us in a way to satisfy the soul in its yearning for redemption. All we have tried to do is to state the problem and some of the factors that enter into it; and to clear the ground a little so that we can deal with it more effectively. If it helps any of the readers of the *REVIEW* to do this, as it has helped us personally, our aim is fully accomplished.

HASKINS, OHIO.

V.

THE SOCIAL UNREST OF TODAY IN THE LIGHT OF THE FOUR HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REFORMATION.

O. H. DORSCHEL.

We are living in an age of unrest. No one will deny that there is a certain spirit of unrest prevalent among mankind such as the world has not experienced for some time. It is a spirit not due to the war, as some are inclined to believe, but rather a spirit that has been brought to a climax by the war. The war has without doubt plunged the whole world into a condition that it would have taken at least fifty years of peace to realize. In other words, the common man has suddenly been brought to realize that some of his God-given privileges have been usurped by others and unless he bestirs himself he will lose all of them. Taking the whole social problem and boiling it right down it will be seen that the universal dissatisfaction—the social unrest—of today centers on this fact. Apply it wherever you may, to a monarchy or to a democracy, to a government by crowned heads or a government by uncrowned heads, wherever this sacred right of man is denied him—that of exercising his divine rights—a social unrest will always prevail, and there is nothing to be conceived that will curb it until these are again restored. History proves this. It may be possible to curb this spirit of social unrest for some time, but the longer it is curbed and compelled by force to keep its head below the surface so much fiercer will it reveal itself when it breaks these bonds and comes to the surface. Woe to those who tried to keep it down; the feelings of hatred seem to know no bounds in such instances.

The social problem is one of vital importance to man because its roots penetrate to the very foundation of human society. When instituted by God human society was founded for a spiritual purpose, man was to be of benefit to man spiritually, which would then prove of benefit to him economically. This has made forever the social problem one in which the *heart* is deeply concerned and not only reason. Any organization ignoring this fact in trying to solve the social problem must necessarily meet with failure.

The prevailing social unrest needs intelligent and unselfish direction. The leaders of social reform in any form whatever must be entirely free from the spirit of dishonesty which will tempt them to fill their pockets at the expense of the ranks. The person—even the socialist—in office must seek to efface the stigma of dishonesty usually attached to the political officeholder who is commonly reported to hold office until his pockets are filled at the expense of the taxpayer. How can this be brought about otherwise than through the influence of the church?

It is the business of the church to interpret great movements that arise, and it is the business of the church to interpret socialism, to put the proper stamp upon it. The church is undoubtedly somewhat to blame for the social unrest of today. It is wrong to assume that the church can not fail. This was one of Luther's contentions at the time of the Reformation. The church will make mistakes as long as it is made up of and controlled by ordinary human beings.

Some people are tremendously disturbed by the growth of socialism and are fighting it with all the energy at their command, but socialism is here to stay. It can not be argued away, nor can it be laughed out of existence. Anyone viewing this great question in this light will meet with serious disappointment. The only way to abolish socialism is to abolish the conditions which bring forth socialism. The social problem is at heart a religious problem, and the church therefore will have an important part in its solution. This is one of the most important

questions confronting the church today and the church must face it for the men are looking to the church to right them in this great question of the age. The church has nothing to lose by a full and open discussion of this great question. It will instruct and enlighten, it will bring about a better understanding of what true socialism is. The church is the institution of God on earth to instill into mankind the spirit of righteousness which finds its expression in carrying out the great law of God, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." That is true Christianity and likewise true socialism.

We live in an age of socialism so widespread as never before. Every age has its socialism more or less, and it is always characterized by the degree of prevailing righteousness. Wherever righteousness toward the people is oppressed there a social unrest is bound to prevail and the voice of the people will be heard all the way from a murmur to a loud and open rebellion, that is history in a nutshell. A social unrest preceded every epoch in the history of mankind that brought about a better condition for humanity.

Man needs the church before he is ready to die, when in a great many instances he first realizes or admits that he has need of it, and sends for its servant, the minister, to lift him into heaven. The man and the church must be of greater benefit to each other. The man needs the church and the church needs the man. It is the duty of the church to prove to man that it is here to serve him while he is living, and is not a last resort for help when he is with one foot in the grave. It is the duty of the church to interest itself in matters pertaining to the welfare of man here below and not hold before him only a future heaven.

"A true Christian righteousness would give the church its needed moral prestige and the pulpit its spiritual authority. When men see that the gospel tends to right existing wrongs, to command the public conscience, to lay the industrial world under the law of love to one's neighbor, to fit men for earth as well as for heaven, the time of our salvation is indeed drawn

nigh. A new moral passion born of this larger moral conception would bridge gulfs between classes that now seem impassable, bring men now indifferent to the church or alienated from it under the power of personal love, and open a thousand doors for the entrance of Christ into modern life."

The pulpit for today must be competent to give instruction in the moral laws which govern social and industrial life—the organized life of humanity. The age requires this instruction; the people desire and demand it; the ministers should give it. The spiritual motives that bind all men together is the pulpit's concern. It must insist on the spiritual meaning and obligation of life in all its capacities. Generous giving must not be permitted to atone for unjust accumulation. It must insist that all life is to be religious, and that in all things God's will can be found and must be obeyed. King Saul—"Obedience is better than sacrifice."

A theory that is not practical is of no benefit to man, and the church which preaches only a theoretical faith, one that can not be of practical value to man, is missing its mission. The church is an institution founded by Christ for the benefit of mankind here below—not only for heaven—which benefit is to be realized in a greater degree in the world to come; and this greater benefit—the joy of heaven—will be realized only by him who has proven of benefit to his fellowmen in such a way that this institution of Christ—the church—has not suffered by his conduct but rather been glorified.

The four hundredth anniversary of the Reformation finds the world in a spirit of unrest very similar to that of the sixteenth century. At that time the then known world underwent a period of reconstruction. Anyone with his eyes open to the events of today will not deny we likewise live in a period of reconstruction. Anyone who has eyes to see knows that the old order of things is racked and tottering, and much attention is given to the future order of things. There were never so many agencies at work seeking to better conditions of humanity, not alone in the church but even outside of it. In looking over the

political field—which seldom is without room for improvement—we find the spirit of the brotherhood of man prevailing as never before.

Take for instance the aim of this war as it is put by our president: "Make the world safe for democracy." Comparing this proclamation with those of all former wars of the world it will readily be seen that it is the most humanitarian of all, that is a contention for the rights of the common people, and one does not need to be a prophet to see that the people are coming into their rights more and more as time goes on. It goes without saying, and history proves it, that the people have made more rapid strides toward democracy wherever the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ was placed high on the pedestal. This was the aim of the Reformers 400 years ago, they endeavored to restore this light of true righteousness which had become obscured. In looking over the work of the Reformers and its consequences we are inclined to believe that they did not place this light high enough or else it has again become obscured, somewhat at least. It therefore remains for the church today, on the occasion of this anniversary, to lift it higher or drive away the obscurity that has enveloped it. In other words, the church must in this age of reconstruction aim "to make democracy safe for the world" while Wilson says: "To make the world safe for democracy." The basis of true democracy is righteousness, and a righteousness that finds its perfection in Jesus Christ. Wherever the church does not preach HIM it fails. True Christianity can not be preached without Christ who is the very essence of it, the center and circumference, "all in all," as Paul says.

Christianity *must* always be the ultimate means of solving the problem of the age, if it does not it is absurd to say Christianity has failed for Christianity *CAN NOT* fail. The *character* which the age gives to Christianity *can* fail and always *does* fail if it does not conform to the true spirit of its founder, Jesus Christ. The mission of the church is to preach a gospel of righteousness and create a desire in all people for equity and justice.

Luther and Zwingli, the greatest social reformers of the sixteenth century, contended for these very principles. When the opportunity presented itself to Luther to reveal whether he was on the side of the oppressor or the oppressed in the state—the nobility or the common people—he cast his lot with the former, although in his actions he championed the cause of the common people. This has caused many to call him a man of great contrasts, but this is a conclusion derived by judging Luther who lived in the sixteenth century, in the light of our day, or the twentieth century. Luther must be judged in the light of the age in which he lived. We must never forget that he was a very conscientious man, and when once convinced not even the king on the throne could move him. (Time will not permit us to enter into this part of Luther's life, it presents an interesting subject for itself.) How about Zwingli in this respect; could we expect different action from him? We are inclined to believe so. Had God granted him a longer life we would have undoubtedly seen him advance farther along this line than Luther did, judging by the actions of his brief career. Zwingli undoubtedly interested himself in the material welfare of the people, along with the spiritual, more than Luther appears to have done. Zwingli evidently revealed a greater spirit of democracy than Luther did; had his spirit prevailed to a greater degree the Reformation undoubtedly would have been more complete than it was, and we would not be called upon today, on the occasion of its four hundredth anniversary, to complete the task. Yet we must never forget the Reformation was God's work, and God works in His own way. Luther, it is said, *had* to lean toward the nobility of his day to successfully carry out the Reformation. He needed civil power to back him up. There is some truth in this, especially if viewed in the light of the relationship of church and state. But it can not be denied that God would have found other means for Luther to bring about results. That he fell short in this respect in his task is proven by the Thirty Years' War that ensued, which appeared almost to undo Luther's work.

What are some of the remedies put forth to quiet this universal social unrest so prevalent today? One looms up so large in comparison with the rest that it overshadows them all, it is found in every nation where this unrest prevails and invariably is characterized by the same name. It is called Socialism.

Let us look at Socialism briefly in the light of what we have so far said.

When I speak of Socialism and Socialists no intelligent person will understand me as referring to Anarchism or Anarchists. The two are often confounded. The socialism of today is not the socialism of fifty years ago. The rabid leaders of but twenty-five years ago are being replaced with some less radical. Socialism as it is today has almost completely changed front. The cry of Liebknecht in 1875, "we must root out the faith in God with all our zeal," is not the cry of the rank and file of socialism today. And such men as Engel, who said "We are simply done with God," and Scholl, who said "We open war upon God because he is the greatest evil in the world," do not receive the attention today they did twenty-five years ago. On the contrary we find socialism and the church getting together. Some of the leading socialists today are admitting and proclaiming the fact that religion is an abiding fact in the life of the race. Socialism will make its greatest strides toward its goal as it holds fast to this truth, and the socialism of today appears to be well aware of this.

Socialism of today differs from the socialism of the past in that it strives to educate its followers more than to persuade them to violent action. Education and enlightenment on vital subjects will convince man and compel him to action more than anything else imaginable, it may not do so as fast as it may be desired but it is the best legitimate way and certain to bring better and more lasting results. A socialist can not help but become a thinker, and he needs to become a right thinker, he needs to be directed in his thinking along the lines of true righteousness. This can be done only according to the word of God.

True socialism is not of the letter, but of the spirit. It begins in the tempers and aims of men, and shapes the social order not by an outward pressure but by an inward law. Many eminent leaders of socialism today admit that not until every individual feels an inner responsibility toward his fellowmen will true socialism become a fact. Sidgwick expresses it as "a moral need of some means of developing in the members a fuller consciousness of their industrial work as a social function, only rightly done when performed with a cordial regard for the welfare of the whole society." Look at this statement for a moment. Is it not saying in many words, what Jesus said in a few in the second part of the chief commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?"

We need to socialize the individual, by this I do not mean to make him a socialist such as are dreaded by many people, but to make him a man whose actions are based on just principles and motives that will render his life one of service to his fellowmen. When all men once act thus a true socialism will be revealed.

Socialism and the church have acted in the past somewhat like two boys quarreling on the opposite side of a fence, calling each other names and viewing each other as enemies. If we know children at all we notice that they forget their differences, and sometimes so quickly that we nor they know how it happened, nor do they seem to concern themselves as to how it happened, they simply forget the past and play together as if nothing had happened. The fence that divided them in their quarrel is no longer a hindrance in bringing them together, it is easily surmounted. Can not the church and socialism learn from the children? Is it not time that they break down this barrier between them, this barrier of hatred? Is it not time they forget the past and work together in the future? Greater things could be accomplished if we could say in this respect with the Apostle Paul: "Forgetting those things which are behind, let us reach forth unto those things which are before us." Happily we are living in an age where this truth is ad-

mitted and we are getting closer together, and why should not the church and socialism get together? No just reason can be given why these two great institutions—for such they are—should exist with any kind of a barrier between them that prevents them from joining hands to meet the common enemy.

The necessity of getting together will not be realized until both admit that they are striving for the same aims. The object of both is the same, only each is working in its own way and in the course of doing so they become antagonized toward each other which is only a natural result of the spirit of sectarianism so strong in mankind. If we could all get rid of our sectarianism—the notion that the party or the organization to which we belong is all right and the others are all wrong—much good would be accomplished and a better spirit would prevail among mankind, but the greatest good that could be bestowed upon man by man, in my estimation, is the bringing about of a better spirit between the church and socialism. Both are making the peculiar experience that this spirit of sectarianism is being rapidly cast out in their own camps. The different shades of opinion which formerly tended to sectarianism are rapidly blending themselves into one harmonious color both in socialism and the church, and these two colors, the color of the church and that of socialism, must ultimately also be blended into one color, one spirit, the spirit of righteousness, not alone toward God but also toward man. A Christianity will then be revealed that will be of benefit to man here on earth already, and not one that will be only for heaven. It may be called a Social Christianity or a Christian Socialism. Call it what you may, it will then reveal a Christianity that does not observe only the first part of the greatest of all Commandments—"Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart," but it will also strive to observe the second part, "and thy neighbor as thyself." It will be a more practical Christianity, and not merely a theoretical one, as perhaps has been the case in the past.

Socialism needs the church and the church needs socialism. I do not mean to place one above the other for one is just as

important as the other. They are as two halves that go to make up a whole; one needs the other in fully carrying out its work; Socialism will help the church to a more practical Christianity and the church in return will instill into socialism a better spirit. In this way the church will purge socialism and socialism will purge the church. This is exactly what is going on today. Socialism has pointed out to the church where it has become lax, and the church is exerting a wholesome influence on socialism. Thus we can see how the two can work together to a great advantage, and that one dare not ignore the other.

I do not mean to say that there will ever be a Religious Socialist Party, nor do I want to say that there should be one. On the contrary, such a party would be unconstitutional. The Constitution of our country insists on the separation of church and state, and any political party taking in the church—regardless of denomination—is doomed. The Socialist Party is a political party and always will be such because it has to deal with existing governments, but this party has been too anti-religious in the past. I do not mean that the other political parties have been more religious, but they have not been anti-religious, they have not come out with such statements against the church as the Socialist party has. This has proven to be of great harm to the party and the more considerate and reasonable leaders and members have admitted this of late and are discarding this policy.

The Socialists of this country dare never forget in emphasizing the Constitution that our forefathers never expected to carry it out without the aid of the church. Although they separated the church and state yet they intended one of the prime factors of our government should be the influence of the church that preaches "where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" and interprets it in the spirit of the *Lord*, as Paul puts it in II. Cor. 3, 17.

BUFFALO, N. Y.

VI.

THE PLACE OF FICTION IN THE PASTOR'S STUDY.

LEE M. ERDMAN.

Mr. Roosevelt remarked some time ago that he had been reading the novels of Dumas and Carlyle's "History of the French Revolution" and had come to the conclusion that the French novelist, notwithstanding the fantastic elements in his plots and characters, gives a more faithful portrayal of French history than the scholarly English historian. It reminds us of the saying of Lord Chatham, recorded by Green. When asked where he had read his English history, he replied, "In the plays of Shakespeare."

Fiction has made its contribution to history. To understand the life and genius of a people we must know more than names and dates. Its temper of soul, its characteristic ideals and virtues must be understood. These are reflected in lifelike form in great works of fiction. In the impossible characters and adventures of Edmund Dantes and D'Artagnan we are presented with a triple extract of the French spirit. Its brilliancy and sparkle, its wit and gayety, its versatility and audacity, its strength and weakness are portrayed, and to us of another race the Gallic temperament is comprehensible. A Richelieu, a Louis XIV, a Danton, a Napoleon become persons of real flesh and blood. In his historical plays Shakespeare takes great liberties with the personages and dates of history. In this sense he is not accurate. But the genius of the great poet enables him to touch, as with a magic wand, dim characters and events. The characters become typically English and the incidents are characteristic of all English life. The reign of the moral law is always emphasized, especially the

doom that waits upon triumphant evil—and, therefore, he is, after all, a great historian.

The contribution of fiction to the better understanding of history is not so striking however as the rich gifts it has laid upon the altar of religion. Religious truth—the truths concerning God and man, destiny and duty—have been preserved in every age for the sons of men through the medium of myth and legend, allegory and parable and later in romance and novel. The deeper experiences of the soul cannot be pinned to earth, analyzed, and then stored away in a proper compartment, bearing the correct label. For a primitive people and largely for us the way of approach to religious truth is that of intimation and suggestion rather than that of bare declaration—the symbol and story, twin children of the religious fancy, are utilized, rather than the religious formulæ begotten of logic. This form of literature is preserved in the sacred books of the east and candidly we must state that a large portion of the Bible must be viewed in this light, else it will not square with present-day knowledge or yield its sacred message. With this view of the Bible, you as students in this seminary are perfectly familiar, and I need not enlarge upon it. Skinner in his introduction to his *Commentary on Genesis* has an illuminating remark on this subject. You will permit a single quotation. "It is not a question of the truth or religious value of the book that we are called to discuss, but only of the kind of truth and the particular mode of revelation which we are to find in it. One of the strangest theological prepossessions is that which identifies revealed truth with matter of fact accuracy either in science or in history. While legend is not history it has in some respects a value greater than history. It reveals the soul of a people, its instinctive selections of types of character which represent its moral aspirations, its conception of its own place and mission in the world. It is a suicidal error in exegesis to suppose that the permanent value of the book lies in the residuum of historic fact that underlies the poetic and imaginative form of the narratives." The tradi-

tions of the Old Testament are in this sense ageless. The common human experiences which lie in the very depths of our nature are conceived under universal forms. The Old Testament suffers violence "only when pulled about and tortured by some unimaginative critic on the one hand, or by some nervous and faithless apologist, with his ingenious schemes of reconciliation, on the other." It is then that the fragrance and charm of life depart and dry bones lie before us.

As we turn to the New Testament we see how fiction contributed to the religious education of the multitudes in Judea and Galilee, who were taught by the Great Teacher, who "without a parable spake not unto them." Jesus points out for all time the value of the imagination in teaching and preaching, the importance of the concrete as over against the abstract. As Trench has said, "He gave no doctrine in abstract form, no skeleton of truth, but all clothed, as it were, with flesh and blood." And in His own manner of teaching He has given us the secret of all effectual instruction. Impressed upon the hearts of men who have forgotten all else are the ineffaceable pictures of "The Foolish Virgins," "The Good Samaritan," and "The Prodigal Son."

Happy is the preacher who can illuminate his discourse with artistic imagination, who can pick the threads of the tangled skeins of present-day life and weave them into concrete pictures of good and evil which grip the hearts of men. Blessed is the preacher who does not lug in his illustrations by the ears from *The Homiletic Review* or some standard textbook of illustrations. He does not abuse our finer sensibilities with harrowing tales or supposedly historic episodes, declared to be authentic, but which upon investigation can never be substantiated, and the origin of which can be usually traced to the diseased imagination of an emotional exhorter. Happy is the preacher whose illustrations grow from within and are not imported ready-made from without. They perform their mission. I once heard one of the great preachers of our church preach on "The Prodigal Son." What a fund of fresh, vital,

gospel truths he drew from the old story. The secret of the charm and appealing power of the sermon was undoubtedly in the artistic and imaginative power of the man who was able to tell the old story in terms of present-day life.

And how shall we know life. One of the means by which we may feel its pulse is through an acquaintance with modern and current fiction. This brings us to a consideration of the contribution of fiction proper to religion and the place therefore which it should occupy in the pastor's study. Heretofore, we have used the term in a rather loose sense, designating the imaginative element in literature. To be more accurate we must limit it to the designation of the prose novel or romance. Fiction of this description reflects the life of an age and great fiction moulds the life of an age and of subsequent times. Henry VanDyke, in the first chapter of his "Gospel for an Age of Doubt," has said: "For one who desires to make men and women what they ought to be, nothing can take the place of an acquaintance of men and women as they are. . . . It seems to me that one of the best means of obtaining this acquaintance is through literature. . . . For this reason I believe that a course in modern novels and poetry might well be made a part of every scheme of preparation for the gospel ministry. The preacher who does not know what his people are reading does not know his people."

The preacher and teacher of religion must be intensely human. There must be nothing provincial or narrow about him. He must be in the world, but not of it. The ideals and thought forms, the virtues and vices, the customs and amusements, the prejudices of every class of society must be understood so that every avenue of approach may be open to the minister of religion. The plan of the outlying works of the enemy should be understood. There is a feeling of intense satisfaction and resourcefulness when we carry a blue-print of the same in our pockets. We know where to train our heavy guns and we know from what quarter to expect attack. And the great novel furnishes us with this much-needed informa-

tion. As a naturalist studies a cross section of vegetable tissue under the microscope and gains therefrom a knowledge of the cellular structure and manner of growth of the entire tree, so the great novelist subjects certain types of character and certain classes of society to his searching examination. The penetration of his art reveals their secret springs of action, the motives that actuate them, their fears and doubts; they walk before us in flesh and blood and we see the eternal laws of God working themselves out in their lives for better or worse. Genius sees and proclaims that which we feel but cannot formulate. Next to a first-hand acquaintance with life on all sides, and in many respects superior to it, is a knowledge of the masterpieces of fiction, the great commentaries on life. For these books, then, with their deepening and quickening influence the wise pastor of souls will reserve generous place on the shelves of his library.

As we view more closely the contribution which different classes of fiction have made to religion, we find that satirical fiction, through caustic criticism and merry jibe, has purged religious forms, laughed to scorn the hollow pretensions of corrupt ecclesiastics and in every age has been an invaluable aid to religious reforms. This school of literature begun by Walter de Map, of the twelfth century, gained influence until it culminated in Chaucer and passed into the open revolt of the Lollards. It reappeared in fairer form in Sir Thomas More and later in the great burlesque of Butler's *Hudibras*.

On the continent this form of fiction was revived among the German humanists, of whom Ulrich von Hutten was a leader. *The Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, written in defense of Reuchlin, did much to speed the day of the Reformation by holding up to scorn and laughter the dense ignorance and immorality of the clergy. Lindsay has pointed out that this book bears the same relation to the scholastic disputations of the later fifteenth century that Don Quixote bears to the romances of mediæval chivalry. Let us take a scene of the *Epistolæ* as quoted by Lindsay. "Magister Henricus Schaffsmulius

writes from Rome that he went one Friday morning to breakfast in the Campo dei Fiori, ordered an egg, which on being opened contained a chicken. 'Quick,' said his companion, 'swallow it or the landlord will charge the chicken on the bill.' He obeyed, forgetting that the day was Friday, on which no flesh could be eaten lawfully. In his perplexity he consulted one theologian after another. One told him to keep his mind at rest, for an embryo chicken within an egg was like the maggots in cheese or worms in fruit which men can swallow without harm to their souls in Lent. But another, equally learned, had informed him that maggots in cheese and worms in fruit were to be classed as fish, which everyone could eat lawfully on fast days, but that an embryo chicken was quite another thing—it was flesh. Would the learned Magister Ortuin, who knew everything, decide for him and relieve his burdened conscience? The writers send to their dear Magister Ortuin short Latin poems of which they are moderately proud. They confess that their verses do not scan, but that matters little. The writers of secular verse must be attentive to such things, but their poems which relate the lives and deeds of the saints, do not need such refinements. The writers confess that at times their lives are not what they ought to be; but Solomon and Samson were not perfect; and they have too much Christian humility to wish to excel such honored Christian saints."

Gross and exaggerated, it still, on the whole, had a healthful influence. It might be interesting to draw a parallel between the services of Ulrich von Hutten rendered to the Reformation of the sixteenth century and the contribution which some of our much-discussed modern novelists are making to the forces which are bringing to us in these latter days an altered conception of God and of Christian obligation—particularly in the social application of the gospel and in the christianizing of international relations. For instance, George Bernard Shaw, flippant skeptic though he be, and though he arouses our ire as we feel that he has no fear of God or regard for man—yet on

sober second thought, we are compelled to admit that he strikes many a tender spot in modern social life and exposes the insincerity and hollowness of many of our social conventions. The production of plays and novels of the type of *The Servant in the House*, by Charles Rann Kennedy, having for its theme the awakening of the soul of an English clergyman, through dire experience, from a sleek and formally religious life to one in which vital christianity holds sway, is on the whole encouraging. Simplicity of life as over against vulgar luxury, brotherhood and service and sincerity are predominating notes.

In a like class is the recent novel of H. G. Wells, *The Soul of a Bishop*. Like the poor, we have H. G. Wells always with us. Much may be said in condemnation and much in praise of him. But one thing is certain, since almost all of our people are reading him it is necessary that we know something about what he is writing. It is true indeed that he takes himself too seriously and makes amazing blunders when he essays the rôle of theologian in his novels. He howls from the house-tops as new world-changing doctrines ideas of social reform which have been taught by liberal religious thinkers for the last three decades. He is serenely unconscious of the deeper aspirations and the better works of modern Christians, and therefore when he portrays the modern church, he erects a man of straw which he deftly knocks to and fro to the great glee of many. And yet he must be reckoned with. The formalism and pharisaism of some aspects of the Christian life and the mediævalism of much of its thought are held up to the light. People who would never read a religious book and have never thought on these things do give more or less serious thought to them when they are so forcibly brought to their attention in modern fiction. It is the privilege of the wise pastor to show to his people the insufficiency and the absurdity of Mr. Wells' conception of God, the first glimpse of whom he permits us to see in the experiences of Mr. Britling and a further revelation of which is imparted in the dope dream of his bishop. Rather, may we say, he reveals God to us in the soul of Mr. Britling, who is

born anew from a flippant self-satisfied life through the loss of his two sons in the great war. He is a striking example of the purging and ennobling power of suffering. There is a haunting truth, echoed by many hearts to-day, in the great words of Mr. Britling, "Our sons have shown us God."

Our own Mr. Winston Churchill assumes a somewhat like attitude and the religious question bulks large in his novels, although he is less blatant and defiant than Wells.

At the other extreme we have the specifically religious novel which has for its theme the triumph of Christianity—the inner triumph, as shown in the great allegory, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*; the outward victory on the field of history, Charles Kingsley's *Hypatia*, Sienkiewicz's *Quo Vadis* and the *Ben Hur* of Lew Wallace. Undoubtedly definite religious impressions have been made through these books and a knowledge of early church history imparted to many who might not have received it in any other way.

And there is also the "novel with a purpose," the story which exposes corruption in office and industrial exploitation. In arousing the slumbering conscience of the North to the cruelty of slavery *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was like a spark in a tinder-box. One of Mrs. Humphrey Ward's novels led to much-needed reforms in the tenement system of London. We have not yet recovered from the sensation produced by the publication of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*.

But the two foregoing types of fiction are not great literature, with the possible exception of *Pilgrim's Progress*. They will not survive. They appeal to conditions of the day and in after times we find that they speak a strange dialect. Their themes are not of universal interest. Grace and purity of style, delineation of plot and character in artistic form are not to be found here. Their message is only for the hour.

The greatest contribution to religion has not been made by the authors who through a story have determined to purify the church or to bring about a moral reform. This is not within the domain of pure fiction. It is the field of the Christian

worker. The writer of fiction does violence to the highest canons of his art when he goes out of his way to preach and moralize. This constitutes the weakness of Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. However, because of its powerful human appeal and its startling and dramatic situations, we are willing to read pages of his philosophy of religion and conduct. Pure fiction reproduces life in its humor and pathos, in its victories and tragedies. It traces the development of character; it takes into account therefore the various factors which contribute to the formation of character. Here we find the great contribution which fiction has made to religion. On the one hand, it bears witness to the reality of the religious experience as one of the formative factors in life, and, on the other hand, the works of fiction of great artistic worth, having for their background atheism and materialism, are instinctively felt to be inadequate. There is then this positive and negative contribution.

Positively, then, fiction bears witness to God since the conscience of mankind will accept only that philosophy of life which takes God into account. Who are the great modern masters of fiction? Undoubtedly Scott, Dickens, Thackeray and George Eliot.

Scott's characters have a definitely religious background, although they do not speak very much about it. Each has his faith and keeps it. Edward M. Chapman, in his volume on *English Literature in Account with Religion*, has this to say of the characters of Scott: "There is no doubt, no unbelief, scarce any shadow upon faith cast by the turning of circumstance. This means not that Scott was indifferent to religion; but rather that his own faith was of the sort which he depicts—sturdy, unshaken, careless of definition, equally careless of perfect consistency perhaps, but accepted as the necessary background of a sane and wholesome life."

And Dickens, the incomparable painter of childhood, celebrator of the poor, master of pathos and humor. Who shall measure his contribution to England and the world in revealing the sacredness of childhood and inspiring sympathy and

intelligent aid for the poor? When will his characters be forgotten—Tiny Tim and Bob Cratchett, Little Nell and David Copperfield? "The practical beneficence of his work," says Chapman, "is written on the pages of our statute books and in the increased humanity of our treatment of children and the poor; his essential cleanness of purpose and method of dealing with vice or crime shines out in refreshing contrast to the theory that, in order to abate a nuisance, one must first wallow in it; and the freshness of his approach to life, which age might temper but could not stale, speaks of the heart of a child that beat in him. He kept into manhood's estate and introduced into his work a thousand childish faults; but no less truly did he first learn and then teach the fundamental law of the Kingdom of Heaven."

Thackeray is one of the great religious forces of modern times. He is no cynic. He does not make fun of goodness and truth, but always pierces with keen wit the follies and foibles of especially the middle and higher classes. The consciousness of the ultimate ineffectiveness of intrigue and craft and the emptiness of wealth and station, when obtained at the price of goodness, comes upon us with overwhelming power as we follow the gradual unfolding of the character of Becky Sharp.

Whatever may be said of George Eliot's failure to retain faith in any formulated doctrine of grace, or her unconventional relations with Lewes, there can be no doubt of her convictions concerning the fundamentals of the Christian faith as revealed in her novels. Her strong characters are men and women of faith, and the great text running through all her works is "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

And Nathaniel Hawthorne, who searched the hearts of men and laid bare the secret operations of conscience, testifies through all his works that the great ultimate question is a moral one. In *The Scarlet Letter* and *Marble Faun* sin is a terrible reality which cannot be concealed and which leaves its blasting mark, bringing travail of soul not only to one's self but to others, but which can be forgiven.

Great fiction, as represented by these authors, bears witness to the reality of the religious experience. The only interpretation of life which makes universal appeal is that which confirms and does not contradict the voice of Christian conscience.

There is another type of fiction which, in a negative way, brings a contribution to religion. It shows what life becomes when faith is dethroned. Edgar Allen Poe does not rank among the erotic school. His characters are chaste and pure. From the standpoint of technique, as an artist in the use of words, Poe has always been recognized as ranking among the first American prose writers. But he has great defects. The horrors which he paints, to use his own words "thrill us, fill us with fantastic terrors, never felt before." But when we close the book we feel that it is only make-believe. We have been in a world of shadows subject to demoniac influences. But this is not the world in which we live. The characters have been tossed to and fro by fitful fate. Reason and faith are obliterated. But this is not of the essence of personality. Personality, as we know it, cannot be made the sport of circumstance; and so, even when we read, we feel that we are held by an hypnotic spell, but presently it will be lifted and life will be seen again as it really is.

This aspect of life is especially apparent in the naturalistic school of French fiction, in the blatant novels of Zola and the stories of consummate beauty of Guy de Maupassant, celebrating the life of the senses. Charming, if we do not stop to think of their implications, and to realize to what life has been reduced. "But God maketh the wrath of man to praise Him." The vein of scepticism discernible in later English fiction is found to be insufficient. The fatalism running through the later works of Thomas Hardy does not ring true. Mr. Phillpotts, a member of a rationalistic society, as Chapman points out, is compelled, when he draws victorious characters—those who are adequate to circumstance—to have recourse to men and women of faith. He bears witness thus that in literature, as in life, the ultimate foundations of re-

ligious sanctions are necessary. Great works of fiction are impossible when faith does not prevail. Humor changes into bitter cynicism; strength of purpose, the will to climb the heights, melts into listlessness when the future is dark and we are made the plaything of chance.

To sum up then, because of the contributions which fiction has made and is making today, we plead for its proper place in the pastor's study. We do not ask for a very large place or for a very important place. We are not unmindful of the peril of novel reading. Constant and promiscuous reading of fiction will certainly lead to mental and moral flabbiness. Nothing, of course, can take the place of the solid study of the Book of Books, with all the critical helps which modern scholarship affords us. But, for our lighter moments, the standard novels and representative modern fiction will aid in quickening our imagination, in acquainting us with the thoughts of our people, and in bringing us visions and revelations in the Lord for our further equipment as effective preachers of His Word.

READING, PA.